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ABSTRACT

This program provides a new framework and approach for breaking the cycle of blame surrounding violent imagery in the culture and promotes an informed and rational public conversation about the topic. The goals of the program are to: (1) reduce exposure to media violence; (2) change the impact of violent images that are seen; (3) locate and explore alternatives to media that focus on violence to solve conflict; (4) uncover and challenge the cultural, economic and political supports for media violence; and (5) introduce skills of media advocacy and organizing for change. Core principles of the media literacy campaign are introduced along with teaching tips for parent and caregiver groups. Sessions in the packet include: (1) "Media Violence: What's It All About?"; (2) "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence"; (3) "Challenging the Hollywood Role Model"; (4) "Movie Ratings and Reviews: How To Make Informed Choices"; (5) "Challenging the Myths of Media Violence"; (6) "Taking Charge at Home"; and (7) "Challenging Media Violence; Locally, Nationally, Globally!" Reproducible handouts accompany the sessions, which are tied to readings in another publication. (EH)

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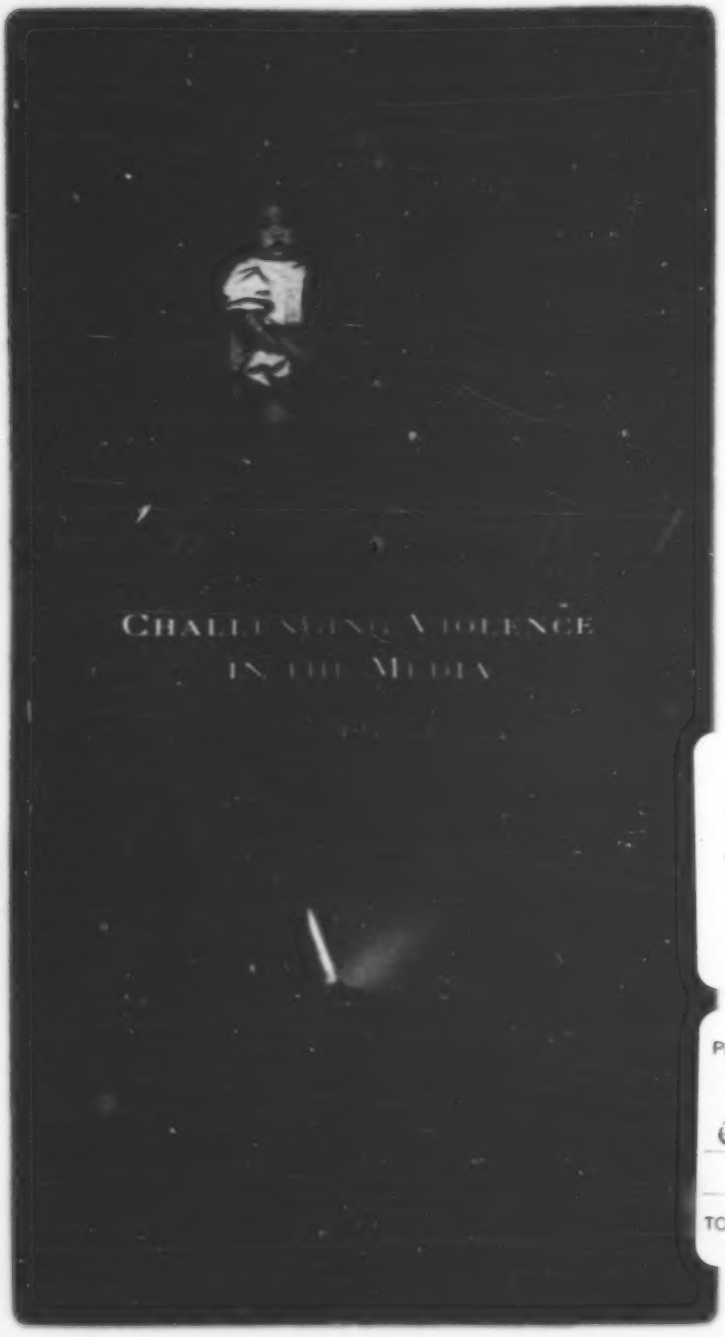

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LEADER'S GUIDE
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PLEASE NOTE:

In order to use this guide effectively, teachers and leaders need to first review the background resources in the Introduction/ Overview Package. This will provide fundamental information on the issues in the controversy over violence in the media, fully preparing you to conduct thought-provoking and successful *Beyond Blame* sessions.

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Beyond Blame

CHALLENGING VIOLENCE
IN THE MEDIA

PARENT/CAREGIVER

CLASSES AND GROUPS

LEADER'S GUIDE

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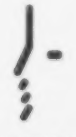

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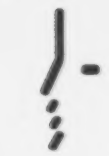

CENTER FOR MEDIA LITERACY

WHO WE ARE

The Center for Media Literacy is dedicated to a new vision of literacy for the 21st Century: the ability to *communicate* competently in all media, print and electronic, as well as to *access, analyze* and *evaluate* the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary mass media culture. These skills of *media literacy* are essential for our future as individuals and as members of a democratic society.

Established in 1989 as an expansion of the acclaimed quarterly magazine, *Media&Values*, the Center now serves a growing membership network of parents, teachers, childcare providers, religious and community leaders. The Center is the largest producer and distributor of media literacy resources in North America.

OUR MISSION

We believe that mass media is the dominant influence in children's lives today. Our mission is to help children— and adults — prepare for living and learning in a global media culture by translating media literacy research and theory into practical information, training and educational tools for teachers and youth leaders, parents and caregivers of children.

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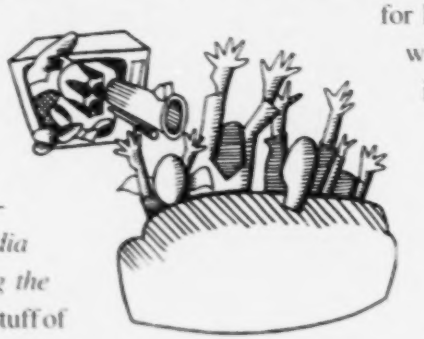
Media Literacy as Violence Prevention

Beyond the blame . . . beyond the debate . . . are human beings — children, young people and adults of all ages — who are daily bombarded with violent images from the media and popular culture.

The parameters of this problem are complex and interrelated.

There are First Amendment concerns, as well as public policies resulting from years of deregulation of the media industry and the erosion of the public interest standard in favor of marketplace forces. And as Walter Wink observes in the initial essay in *Media and Violence: Part One: Making the Connections*, violence is the very stuff of our fundamental mythologies, including the myth of the American West.



While Hollywood may feed these myths, Hollywood did not start them. Nor can Washington legislate them under the rug.

Violence cannot be sanitized out of our culture even if gruesome and gratuitous violence becomes more and more "politically incorrect" in popular entertainment.

There will still be violence in the media, as in life, because there is evil in the world and human nature has its shadow side. There is also grinding poverty and substance abuse and meaninglessness which create a seedbed for violence as a way for some to cope with injustice. Such violence will find its way into the news and storylines of both high art and popular culture.

Nevertheless, violence is a growing issue of public safety and a major health problem in urban cities and rural communities alike. Children are killing children. Crime is devastating neighborhoods. Violence and the fear of violence are strangling the human spirit. As we prepare to enter the 21st century, we must find workable solutions to reduce violence in our world and build structures for living and working in harmony with one another and with the earth itself.

We all recognize that media violence is not the sole cause of violence in society, but more and more, we're coming to understand that it does reinforce the myths and images, beliefs and attitudes that support a culture of violence.

Since the introduction of television in the 1950's, society has been engaged in a "circle of blame" about who's "responsible" for violence in media and popular culture. The truth is we all share responsibility for the cultural environment we live in, just as we're all responsible for the physical environment our children will inherit from us.

It's time to move beyond blame, to see media violence as a systemic issue in a contemporary society and to develop ways to challenge — and change — the violence, not just in our media, but in our culture and in our lives.

Our vision is broader than simply reducing media violence. We strive to create a world where our children can grow up safe, healthy and whole.

Goals of the Beyond Blame Program

Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media provides a creative new framework and approach for breaking the cycle of blame and promoting an informed and rational public conversation about the impact of violent imagery in our culture today. In classes and courses, afterschool programs and parent workshops, individuals of all ages can learn important skills for reducing their exposure to media violence while gaining insight and motivation to challenge its growing presence in our media culture.

There *are* alternatives to media violence. And media literacy can help us find them. Five key goals run throughout the *Beyond Blame* program:

1. Reduce exposure to media violence.

The amount of violent imagery now prevalent in our culture is unprecedented in human history. Researcher George Gerbner notes that we are "awash in blood." Research indicates this has many serious impacts, not just on individuals, but on society as a whole. Helping parents, adults and young people become aware of the cumulative effects of violent imagery — and then how to reduce exposure — is a fundamental theme throughout the *Beyond Blame* program.

For example, Teen/Adult group sessions engage participants in "taking a stand" on media violence: what do they accept and what do they reject? For themselves? For children in their care? The lesson plans for children help them discover and "make the connections" between violence portrayed in the media and the many ways violence and aggressiveness are manifested in their classroom or on the playground, among friends and in their families.

Parents learn skills of media monitoring and how the ratings work so that they can better select age-appropriate entertainment for their children. Males, especially those in the sought after age-demographic 18-49, are challenged to examine their preference for "action-adventure" especially when children are present.

Media violence proliferates, in part, because it is profitable. Reducing exposure to media violence — child by child, teen by teen, family by family — is a fundamental first step in building a critical mass of public opinion that makes excessive media violence "politically incorrect" and ultimately, unprofitable.

2. Change the impact of violent images that are seen.

The growing availability of media literacy education does not excuse the storytellers of society from accepting their share of responsibility for the cultural climate in which our children are growing up. But there are ways to *deconstruct* and *decode* the techniques used to stage violent scenes so that they lose some of their glamour and appeal. It is important for children to learn early on the difference between reality and fantasy and to know how costumes and camera angles and special effects can fool or mesmerize them.

Another way to challenge violent scenes is to project real-life consequences onto media portrayals of violence. In Elementary sessions, young children begin to ask "who will be sad?" or "who will clean up the mess?" while middle school students more easily grasp the edited unreality of "reality" television. Parents learn new ways to see TV through children's eyes so they can better assess what their children do and do not comprehend and guide them accordingly.

Research shows that the critical skills embodied in media literacy learning can be taught and, through guided practice, can become everyday habits for both children and adults.

3. Locate and explore alternatives to media that focus on violence to solve conflict.

The issue of media violence is really one of storytelling. We all learn who we are, how to behave, what to believe through the stories of our culture. Who is telling stories to our children today? What has happened to our culture that violence has become a primary way we entertain ourselves?

Challenging violent role models created by Hollywood is a core theme that runs throughout the *Beyond Blame*

> **Our vision must be to create a world where our children can grow up safe, healthy and whole.**

program. Children learn to distinguish between "true" heroes and heroines and "fake" ones. Teens explore the meaning of courage in dramatic portrayals. Adults confront how standard plot formulas reinforce our cultural conditioning to resolve conflict through "fight or flight."

It's also important for all age groups to explore alternatives to violence both in entertainment and in life. Building on the ideas in Arthur Kanegis' "New Heroes for a New Age" in *Media and Violence: Part Two: Searching for Solutions*, children create new endings to scenes which commonly end in violence. Parents develop a pro-social checklist for choosing videos, movies and games for their children. Schools and daycare centers, libraries and families (grandparents, too) are encouraged to build collections of books and videos that provide positive role models to consciously counterbalance the actions and attitudes of violent "superheroes."

4. Uncover and challenge the cultural, economic and political supports for media violence.

Media literacy education empowers viewers to ask hard questions of themselves, of others and of society, to "make the connections" between what they see on the screen and what they experience at home, at work, at school. Media violence is not isolated from other social issues facing us today — drugs, domestic violence and child abuse, guns, unemployment, structures of dominance that alienate rich from poor.

Each guide contains a core session on the "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence" which summarizes the psychological research to date and links the viewing of media violence to ways we act toward one another.

Further, *Beyond Blame* sessions on confronting the "Six Myths of Media Violence," on the news, the decline of sportmanship and the volatile messages that result from mixing sex and violence, provide opportunities for older teens, adults and parents to confront the larger system of violence that pervades our whole culture.

Without this wider perspective, efforts to reduce media violence on television, movies or video games will be as ineffective as bandaids on a broken leg.

5. Introduce skills of media advocacy and organizing for change.

In the United States and Canada, media literacy education incorporates and builds on a tradition of media activism and advocacy. Those who seek to right wrongs or protect the public interest have had many causes to support in recent decades as the powerful potential of mass media has become more and more beholden to vested economic interests.

Surely no social cause is more important now in the 1990's than challenging the media's contribution to our growing culture of violence.

But there is no one simple remedy. Like the environmental movement which incorporates a variety of activities from recycling pop cans to cleaning up toxic waste dumps, the "cultural environmental" movement must also develop multiple actions — some personal or local, others national or global. Like any social change effort, success will only come from collaborative efforts on many fronts for many years.

Beyond Blame provides a variety of tools and resources to help organize for change — from where and how to write letters to express your point of view to leveraging financial stockholdings for social responsibility by media corporations. There are dozens of "Action Projects to Pursue" throughout the guides. Even children learn to organize and communicate their point of view to local media owners, video-game manufacturers and their elected representatives.

The Time has Come

For 40 years, the cycle of blame around media violence has left us powerless and paralyzed. The time has come to stop blaming and start building a movement for a caring culture. The lesson plans, video, audio and print resources in *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media* give you tools for the task. Use them well. And, "Never doubt," as Margaret Mead has said, "that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Core Principles of Media Literacy

Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media is based on the premise that viewers, readers and listeners of media can learn and grow in their understanding of how and why media function as they do.

It is a lifelong process but is especially important for children today whose formative years are increasingly influenced by television and popular culture.

Evolving from research over several decades by educators in Australia, England, Canada and the United States, media literacy is a growing academic discipline with five core principles. You'll find these principles embedded in each of the sessions in *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media.*

1. All media are constructions.

Media are carefully manufactured cultural products. They create an emotional experience that *looks* like reality, but of course is not — because it is all made up by one person — or many people — who select this picture and edit out those words or pick this scene to include while another 20 versions land on the cutting room floor. Media are not "real" but they affect people in real ways because we take and make meaning for ourselves out of what we see, hear and read.

2. Media use unique "languages."

Media language is unique to each form of communication — whether newspapers, TV game shows or horror movies. The language works because it is used over and over as a shorthand for conveying intended meanings: scary music heightens fear, camera angles convey relationships, headlines signal significance. Understanding the grammar, syntax and metaphor system of media language heightens our appreciation and enjoyment of media experiences, as well as helps us to be less susceptible to manipulation.

The best way to understand how media is put together is to do just that. Media *production* and media *analysis* are the two sides of the media literacy coin.

3. Audiences "negotiate meaning."

No two people see the same movie or hear the same song on the radio; even parents and children do not see the same TV! Each reader or viewer uses prior knowledge and experience in the process of reading, watching or listening. Skillful readers and viewers examine different stylistic features of a media product and pay careful attention to the context in which the message occurs.

This concept turns the tables on the idea of TV viewers as just passive "couch potatoes." We may not be conscious of it but we are constantly trying to "make sense" of what we see, hear or read. The fundamental skills of media literacy allow us to be *conscious* and *deliberate* about what we experience and, more important, how we interpret media experiences in our lives.

4. Media have commercial interests.

Media are ad-driven businesses. Newspapers lay out ads on their pages first. The space remaining is devoted to news. Likewise, TV programs don't exist simply to entertain us. They are there to ensure that a certain number of viewers will be watching when a commercial comes on. Corporate sponsors pay TV stations based on the number of people they expect to be watching. But not just anybody will do. Advertisers want specific kinds of viewers (for example, children) who have the ability to spend their money on the advertisers' products (toys). TV programs are designed so that the right people will watch when the commercials come on.

Maybe it's not the way it ought to be — but, in truth, most media are provided to us, as researcher George Gerbner says, by private corporations with something to *sell* rather than by the family, church or school with something to *tell*.

5. Media have embedded values.

Media, by their very nature *being* constructed, carry a subtext of who and what is important — at least to the person or persons doing the constructing. There are no

Media Literacy is the ability to communicate competently in all media, print and electronic, as well as to access, understand and evaluate the powerful images, words and sounds that make up our contemporary media culture.

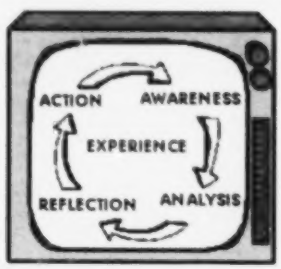
value-free media and never will be. This presents a challenge for all of us to learn to "read" the media critically in order to uncover the value messages that are embedded in them. Only then can we judge whether to accept or reject these messages as we negotiate our way each day through our mediated environment.

An Active Learning Model

The overall goal of *Beyond Blame* is to break the cycle of blame about violence in the media by engaging millions of people in a learning process that leads from awareness to action on key issues in the media violence debate.

The learning methodology in materials developed by the Center for Media Literacy is based on the work of Brazilian educator Paolo Freire. It can be summarized as a four-step learning process: *Awareness*, *Analysis*, *Reflection* and *Action*. You'll usually find the steps identified at the beginning of each lesson plan as objectives.

In the *Awareness* step, participants begin to discover and articulate their own ideas and experiences about violence in the media. This offers them a chance to identify aspects of their everyday media lives that they may never have stopped to think about.



In the *Analysis* step, participants come to question the political, economic, social or cultural causes that make the media the way they are. This step is especially crucial in the issue of media violence because of the many interrelated aspects of the problem: the economics of the media industry, First Amendment concerns, the cultural breakdown of many family systems, etc. Without a clear grasp of how things got to be the way they are, we can't plan effective action for making changes for the future.

Reflection is the step in which we move beyond the media as we know them to how we want them to be. It requires that we recognize and consider the philosophical tenets, ethical values and democratic principles that we accept as guides for our lives, individually and collectively.

Finally, the *Action* step gives participants an opportunity to formulate constructive action ideas — ideas that will lead to personal changes in their own media choices and viewing habits, as well as working for change locally, nationally or globally. Each lesson concludes with some action step. Plus there are several sessions designed to engender brainstorming for ongoing personal or community actions.

Learning About Media by Making Media

Media production can complement the understanding people get from analyzing the media. By making media, we become better equipped to deconstruct the media presented to us by networks, newspaper chains, cable channels and film studios. Media production heightens our ability to understand the decision-making process that goes into making media messages.

If you're leading the sessions for a group of students, you may find that they already have opportunities for making media since many schools have journalism or media production classes. Some of your participants may own their own camcorders. Public access cable facilities and media art centers also offer workshops that enable community members to rent video equipment inexpensively and make their own video productions.

But while media production activities are instructive, they do not substitute for analytical work. The goal of media literacy education is not to become amateur producers but rather to engage the media in our lives. We do this by exploring media's impact upon our cultural, political and social worlds, questioning its messages and evaluating its techniques. This process empowers us to choose whether to accept or reject the values conveyed to us daily through the media.

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Teaching Tips: For Parent and Caregiver Groups

Most people know a lot about the media already. You don't need a Ph.D. in communications to help them re-examine their knowledge. Your own experiences with the media coupled with the time you spend preparing will provide you with the basic tools you need to help your group participate actively in the current national conversation on media and violence.

Beyond Blame / Parents/Caregiver was written primarily for use in a lively process-oriented educational setting with parents and other adults who care for children. The session plans provide for much more than just a "discussion" of various topics concerned with media and violence. Through interactive learning activities, each session opens up new ways of thinking about this complex issue and leads paricipants to personal and group actions that can bring about change — personal, local, national and global.

Use and Time Requirements

Beyond Blame / Parent/Caregiver is a seven-part program which includes seven sessions requiring a minimum frame of one hour each. The program is appropriate in a variety of venues including the following:

- *PTA or PTSA meetings*
- *Community parenting classes*
- *Teen parenting classes*
- *As a series of topical workshops in an educational conference*
- *Women's or men's organizations that sponsor educational courses*
- *Churches and synagogues*
- *Pre-school or daycare centers*
- *Parent Support Groups*
- *"Inservice" courses for teachers and other child caregivers*

What's in this Kit and How does it Work?

Everything you need to know to lead *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media* can be found in this package which contains:

1. Introduction/Overview Unit

The *Introduction/Overview* unit is designed for self-learning, to focus a study group of teachers/leaders, to present at a faculty or team meeting or to present publicly to a parent or community group.

In preparing to lead *Beyond Blame*, you should plan two to three hours to work through the *Introduction/Overview* material by yourself or with colleagues in a group. The *Introduction/Overview* will introduce you to the fundamentals of media literacy education and the core concepts about media and violence from scientific research and social analysis, as well as studies in mass media and communication.

Be prepared to be challenged! The issues are complex and there are no simple solutions. However, if we are to resolve this issue and make the world more safe for our children and ourselves, we must get started — today! Teachers and leaders willing to work with children, as well as adults, are making a major contribution to reducing the quantity and impact of media violence in our culture.

2. Parent/Caregiver — *Leader's Guide E*

The book you are holding is *Leader's Guide E* and contains educational plans, as well as reproducible handouts for seven sessions on various topics related to media and violence. All are suitable for parents, grandparents and other adults who work with young children. The sessions are intended to be used consecutively as a seven-part program.

Videotape "E" contains a series of video clips to use with the session plans. Each segment on the tape is clearly marked to correspond to a video "cue" mark in the appropriate session plan. Additional materials that may be needed are clearly identified at the beginning of each session.

Each of the seven session plans concludes with a list of suggested "Action Projects to Pursue." Follow-up actions are positive ways for community groups to channel their energy and concern for changing the structures that support our culture of violence.

3. Teen/Adult — *Leader's Guide D*

A second Leader's Guide and video is included in this package for use with teens of high school age and adults. The *Teen/Adult* guide consists of "stand-alone" sessions on various, timely topics, such as violence in the news or issues of violence and sexuality which are of concern to older teens and adults. They are suitable for high school classrooms and adult education programs sponsored by a college, church or community center. Be sure to examine this guide for additional group learning ideas, handouts and action projects to pursue.

Preparing to Lead the Sessions

The activities in this Leader's Guide enable you to act more as a group facilitator and less as a lecturer. A few simple suggestions may help you make your sessions a success:

- When possible, arrange seats in a circle so that all group members can see one another. You'll be surprised how much this helps interaction and participation!
- The sessions work best for groups of 15 to 35 people.
- At the first session, identify a few participants to act as facilitators. They can help arrrange seating and distribute materials, such as pencils or worksheets.
- You might also try using co-leaders to help operate the VCR and monitor while you are fielding questions or facilitating discusssions.
- Keeping time is very important, especially during periods of open discussion. At the first session, make an agreement with participants to limit their comments so that all can participate. Help the group to recognize that it is far better for many people to contribute one idea than for one or two people to dominate with long-winded statements. Use a kitchen timer to keep track of time. When the buzzer rings, the person speaking can finish his/her thought, then move to the next activity. It is very important to be strict about time from the very beginning.
- Group participation is essential to the success of any adult learning program. Ask people who have not spoken whether they have thoughts they would like to share. Ask those who have spoken once or twice to hold their comments until new people speak.
- If no one immediately responds after you ask a question, pause before you offer an answer yourself. Often participants just need a moment to formulate their thoughts.
- Another way to widen discussion is to give participants a minute to write a key idea or thought down on a piece of paper. Then, everyone has one idea to share.
- If you're nervous about leading your first session, ask a friend or family member to do a dress rehearsal with you.

For additional tips on leading groups and facilitating discussion, contact the Study Circles Resource Center, Route 169, Box 203, Pomfret, CT 06258, 210-928-2616.

Reprint Permission

The purchase of this workshop kit includes reprint permission for all handouts in unaltered form for those participating in your classes or group sessions. (See page 37). Other materials, including video and audio resources, may not be reproduced.

Evaluations

Feedback is a leader's best friend. Be sure to save five minutes at the end of each session to obtain comments that will improve the effectiveness of future sessions. Evaluations will also make it apparent which concepts participants understand best.

A one-page evaluation form is provided in the *Introduction/Overview* Leader's guide on page 22. Or, on an overhead transparency or piece of tablet paper, write the following two statements. Ask participants to complete the sentences on an index card or piece of paper.

- *"One idea I'll always remember from this session is..."*
- *"The one thing I would change about this session is..."*

Finally, send news of how you used these resources to the Center for Media Literacy. We're eager to know what your group learned and what you are doing about reducing media violence in your community. Good luck!

Video Log for Video E Parent/Caregiver

E #1 Violence montage illustrating several types of media violence (recorded twice)

E #2 *Terror in the Night*, a promotional clip (recorded three times).

E #3 Role model montage illustrating people of diverse age, gender and ethnicity.

E #4 Four clips illustrating violence from a cartoon, a drama, a reality show and the news—to be used for analysis.

NOTE:

As you become familiar with the instructional objectives, you may wish to substitute different or more timely clips that you collect from your own TV viewing. Or participants may bring you clips for analysis. Feel free to build your own collection.

It is strongly recommended that you use a TV/VCR system with a remote control that has a pause button. Use it to stop and start the clips or rewind as needed to show again. And keep the lights in the room on!

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PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

1

Media Violence: What's It All About?

Concept: Media violence is as pervasive as television itself. In this session, parents and adults become aware of the amount and type of media violence coming into the home and reflect on how their habits affect their children's.

Objectives:
- To become aware of the amount and types of media violence coming into the home. *(Awareness)*
- To be able to distinguish different types of media violence and the various ways they are portrayed. *(Analysis)*
- To identify genres that rely heavily on violent imagery. *(Analysis)*
- To reflect on how parent and adult media habits affect their children's. *(Reflection)*
- To strategize and learn ways to monitor children's and adult's media use in and out of the home. *(Action)*

Media Literacy Principles:
- All media are constructions.
- Audiences negotiate meaning.

Leader Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "View from the Network: What Counts As Violence?" (p. 15).
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "And Now A Word From Mother" (p.10).
  "No More Blood at Eleven" (p.12).
- Duplicate one copy of each handout for every participant.
  Handout #1, **Awareness Cartoon** (you may also want to make the cartoon into an overhead transparency or enlarge it to poster size).
  Handout #2, **Types of Media Violence.**
  Handout #3, **Family Viewing Tally.**
  Handout #4, **Media Violence Fact Sheet.**
  Handout #5, **History of the Media Violence Issue.**
- Practice reading aloud the *Closing Quote* or preselect a participant to prepare to read it.
- Prepare evaluation materials or copy Evaluation Form on page 22 of Leader's Guide A.
- Set up VCR and monitor, and cue videotape to Video E #1 — A montage of violent clips.

Additional Materials Needed:
- Pens or pencils for all participants
- Make sure the room arrangement is flexible to allow the large group to split into smaller groups of four or five.
- Kitchen timer

Time Required: One hour

Teaching Tips
- Use a kitchen timer to help control open discussion time. Agree with participants on amount of time for discussion — e.g., eight minutes. Set the timer. When it goes off, time is up. The person speaking completes their comment. Then move on to the next activity.
- Make the cartoon into a large poster inexpensively at a full-service copy center.

INSTRUCTIONS

Handout #1:

Welcome participants. Display the awareness cartoon on Handout #1 in front of the room and/or distribute a copy to each participant.

Inclusion:
(15 mins.)

Ask everyone to take a minute or two to read the cartoon, consider the questions and to use the blank space to jot down any thoughts or ideas they have in response.

Next, invite everyone to air their concerns and/or reactions to the cartoon and the influence of media violence on their families. Anticipate a wide variety of responses and allow for the likelihood that many people will feel completely discouraged, angry or frustrated. Give them a chance to air one concern each (be brief) without allowing the discussion to degenerate into an endless gripe session. Suggest that as a group, they have 10 minutes to moan and groan. Then we will move on to the business of finding useful solutions!

Assure everyone that this session and the subsequent sessions of the *Beyond Blame: Challenging Violence in the Media* parent workshop will focus on gathering information and identifying tools for each person and each family to take action.

Begin by asking what kinds of programs first come to mind when they think of media violence. Responses may range from cop shows, music videos to horror films, shooting, fighting, etc. Accept 6-8 responses then move on.

Activity I:
(15 mins.)

Explain that violence is a lot more pervasive than people generally think. The next activity will move beyond our general understanding of what is violence and delve deeper into other issues.

Handout #2:

Distribute Handout #2, **Types of Media Violence,** and pens or pencils if necessary. Point out that in discussing violence in media, it is important to distinguish whether the portrayal is real life, a re-enactment, live action or animation. Briefly explain each of the categories shown on the handout and give everyone a minute to clarify their meanings.

- *Real life* — Violence as it is happening: news, sports, war, natural disasters, etc.
- *Re-enactment* — Actors re-creating violent events that once happened in real life.
- *Live-action drama* — Actors portraying stories of violence from written scripts.
- *Animated* — Moving drawings of human or animal characters engaged in violent activity.
- *Violence with a weapon* — gun, knife, club, car, etc.
- *Violence without a weapon* — pushing, hitting, punching, etc.
- *Verbal violence* — yelling, threatening, cursing, etc.
- *Crashes and explosions*

Next, prepare the group to watch a video montage. Situate the VCR and monitor so that everyone can see. You'll need to allow a chance for everyone to find a comfortable viewing spot.

Explain that they will watch a short video montage twice. The first time they will watch the whole segment *without talking or writing*. While watching, ask them to focus on the types of violence they see.

- *Is violence always shooting?*
- *When is yelling violence?*
- *Is the violence real? Dramatized? Animated?*

Video E #1:

Show Video E #1. After the clip is over, press stop and explain the next step.

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The second time, they will watch the same segment while tallying their observations on the handout. Ask the participants to mark in the appropriate boxes as they watch the video and see examples of each type of violence.

Explain that some of the images may not fit neatly into only one category. Others may not fit at all. The point is to raise awareness of the prevalence of these kinds of imagery.

Replay Video E #1: Show the video segment a second time, press stop and give the participants a moment more to complete the handout.

Group responses: *(10 mins.)* Invite the group to *briefly* share their observations by using these questions to focus their responses:

- *How does looking for violence change the way you would normally watch this kind of programming?*
- *What did you notice about the violence portrayed in genres you enjoy?*
- *What did you notice about violence in shows your children watch regularly?*

Discussion: Ask participants which media or genres rely heavily on violence to get our attention. Allow about five minutes for the group to generate ideas and examples. Use the following questions to direct their thoughts:

- *Does all violence originate from horror films and cop shows?*
- *Documentation of real-life violence is very common. Which genres rely on real-life violence?*
- *How do news line-ups use violence to attract our attention? The saying is: If it bleeds, it leads.*
- *Which genres use violence as jolts or flashes of excitement to keep our attention?*
- *Do programs and movies marketed for children and families portray violence as funny?*
- *How do video games reward players who succeed in "finishing" their opponents?*

Activity II: *(15 mins.)* Emphasize that after recognizing the availability of these types of violent media, the next step is to reflect on how home and family media use can increase or decrease exposure to this type of violence.

Form small groups: Ask participants to form smaller groups of four to five. Distribute Handout #3, **Family Viewing Tally.** Allow the group a minute or two to complete the handout.

Handout #3: Ask the group members to talk among themselves about what they notice about their family's media habits and to reflect on how their media habits affect their children's. Use the following questions for starters:

- *How much time are your children making media choices behind closed doors?*
- *Are you generally aware of the types of programs your children are choosing while watching alone?*
- *What do you know about their media choices while away from home?*
- *How do adult media choices inadvertently become children's media choices?*

Group reports: Call groups together and ask for short reports from a few people. Suggest that people "reality check" their answers by watching more closely how their family makes media choices during the coming week.

Summary and Closure: This first step, awareness, is the key to tackling this issue. We must identify types of media violence and link our exposure to the way we use media. To assess the extent to which we are exposed to media violence informs us about ways to take action and find solutions. Encourage the participants to use the information in the fact sheet and the results of the tally to get a sense of how much violence they or their children are exposed to in an average week.

Handouts #4 & #5

Next, distribute Handout #4, **Media Violence Fact Sheet** and Handout #5, **History of the Media Violence Issue.**

Alert participants that media and violence are not a new issue. Years ago, as many children were watching *Gunsmoke* and *Loony Tunes*, researchers and legislators were concerned about the possible effects of such exposure. Since then, both the concern and the urgency to find solutions have increased as violent entertainment begins to affect us, not only as individuals but, more important, as a society. This workshop and our developing awareness of this issue is part of 40-year-old path toward challenging our culture to respond to the cumulative impact of portrayals of violence and violent behavior.

To close this session, ask participants to sit quietly or stand in a circle while you (or a preselected participant) proclaim aloud the following thoughtful quote. Invite two or three people to share how the quote resonates for them as parents or caregivers.

Closing Quote:

"Parents used to be the channel through which children learned about the outside world. They could decide what to tell their children and when to tell it to them ... Television destroyed the system that segregated adult from child knowledge ... Instead, it presents the same information directly to children of all ages. TV takes our kids across the globe before parents give them permission to cross the street. Children don't necessarily understand everything that they see on television, but they are exposed to many aspects of the adult world that parents might not have decided to tell them about."

- Joshua Meyrowitz, **Media&Values,** ***issue #52-53***

Evaluation:

Distribute the Evaluation Form (in the *Introduction/Overview* unit, Leader's Guide A, page 22) and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

Make extra copies of tally sheet:

- Take home extra copies of the tally sheet and encourage friends, neighbors and family members to assess their viewing skills.

Keep a media journal:

- Introduce the idea of keeping a media journal or notebook for the duration of this program. Encourage participants to write down their reflections and thoughts after each session and throughout the week. Make notes of questions to ask and ideas to share with the group. Cut out articles from newspapers or magazines or summarize an idea they see on the news or in a TV show. Include insights from conversations with their children, friends or other family members. Bring the journal with them each week to remind them of ideas and questions to share.

"Add Up" amount of media violence:

- Provide your participants with the Handouts #9 and #10 from the *Elementary* unit, Teacher's Guide B or Handout #13 from the *Middle School* unit, Teacher's Guide C which help children "add up" the amount of violence they see in the media. Adults can fill them out too! Or share them with older children.

Video A #1:

- If your group has not seen Video A #1 from the *Introduction/Overview* unit, you may wish to use it in reviewing the history of media violence.

Video A #7:

- Use this spot of the shaggy dog leaving home because his young owner is "watching too much television" to prepare a short presentation to demonstrate how much TV kids watch. Conclude with tips for cutting down. Schedule the presentation to a variety of parent or community groups.

PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

2

Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence

Concept: Does watching violence make our children more violent? Does the proliferation of media violence create a more violent society? This session focuses on these cornerstone issues and uncovers new ways to consider the questions.

Objective:
- To identify differences in the way children of different age groups experience video imagery. (*Awareness*)
- To compare how different age groups react to violent imagery. (*Analysis*)
- To consider the effects of media violence on our way of life and our society. (*Reflection/Action*)

Media Literacy Principles:
- Audiences are not passive but actively "negotiate meaning" as they watch, read or listen.
- Media have embedded values and points of view.

Leader Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "Strung Out on Aggression" (p.6),
  "Growing Up Violent: Decades of Research Link Screen Mayhem With Increase in Aggressive Behavior" (p.8),
  "No Doubt About It—Media Violence Affects Behavior" (p.14).
- Duplicate one copy of each handout for every participant:
  Handout #6, **What Do *You* See?**
  Handout #7, **Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence.**
- Review audio tape discussion of the four effects of viewing media violence.
- Set up VCR and monitor and cue videotape to Video E #2 — *Terror in the Night* promo clip.
- OPTIONAL: Incorporate Video A #3 — Summary of research (from *Intro/Overview* unit) in preparation for Activity II.
- Practice reading aloud the *Closing Quote* or preselect a participant to prepare to read it.
- Prepare evaluation materials or copy Evaluation Form on page 2[illegible] of Leader's Guide A.

Additional Materials Needed:
- Pens or pencils for all participants
- Arrange the room to allow the large group to split into four smaller groups.
- Kitchen timer

Time Required: 1 hour and 15 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS

Review tally sheets: *(5 mins.)*

Have a few participants share what they gained from "reality checking" last session's tally sheet during the week. What new insights are they gaining about how much media is used in their home and how much of it may contain violence?

Introduction:

Ask participants to share anecdotes which indicate the naive ways children try to understand TV. Prompt them with an example and/or some starters:
- *Have you ever been surprised by some interpretation expressed by your child, or a child you know, while watching TV? Many children think TV characters live inside the television set.*
- *Has your child ever seemed confused or frightened after watching violent media portrayals?*

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Discussion:
(5 mins.)

Give the group a chance to share their observations and anecdotes. Use a kitchen timer to keep within the time frame.

Explain that these anecdotes, coupled with research, can inform us about the way children of different ages react to and understand televised images.

Activity I:
(30 mins.)

After the group discussion, explain that the following activity will let them *experience* first-hand how children react to violent images.

Form four teams:

Have the large group break into four teams of any size. Help everyone situate their teams so they can easily see the television monitor, as well as be able to work together later.

Handout #6:

Distribute Handout #6, **What Do *You* See?**

Give the teams a minute or two to read and review the information describing each age group: preschoolers: 3-5 years, school age: 6-10, preteens: 11-14 and teenagers: 14-18.

Teams role play:

Next, assign an age-group to each team and ask them to watch the upcoming 30-second video segment from the point of view of their age group. Mention that they'll watch it twice because it's very short — only 30 seconds. Say something like: *You won't be watching this as adults, but as a three-year-old boy, a 10-year-old girl, etc.* Ask one person in each group to volunteer to read the characteristics of their age group aloud from the handout. Give the groups a few minutes to note and clarify these characteristics.

Next, set the stage for viewing by describing the following scenario:

It's after supper, you and the rest of your family have finished doing the dishes, lunches are packed for the next day of school and everyone has settled down to watch a TV game show. The show cuts to a commercial when, suddenly, the following movie promo comes on:

Video E #2:

Show Video E #2— *Terror in the Night* promo clip.

Stop when the screen goes black. Ask participants to reflect quietly for a minute about what they've seen — not as adults but as someone who's three or nine or 16. Remember to keep in character! Then replay the video for a second time. (A third copy is also provided on the tape.)

Role-play discussion:

After seeing the video several times, ask participants to discuss what they actually saw or felt about what they saw. Encourage the groups to stay true to their roles by speaking only in first person, for example,

- *"I'm a four-year-old boy. I saw..."*
- *"I'm a 12-year-old girl. What I saw was.."*

Teams share responses:

Join the group back together. Ask for a representative to share each age group's point of view. Again make sure representatives don't fall out of their roles. Be prepared for humor and even laughter as groups reply with either the naive or savvy insights of children.

Teaching Tip

The better the teams keep to their roles, the more informative this activity becomes. Remember, we learn most when we are having fun!

After all the groups have presented, summarize that it's clear that different kids see things differently. But the question still remains, is it dangerous for our children to see these images?

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OPTIONAL:

If your group has not seen *Intro/Overview* Video A #3 summarizing Dr. Leonard Eron's 20-year research on viewing violence, introduce it here followed by a brief discussion.

Activity II:
(20 mins.)

Many people are hesitant, at first, to agree that media violence makes people violent because they look at themselves and say, "Hey, I grew up watching cartoons, and I turned out OK." That may be true, but how we turn out *as individuals* is not the only issue we must be concerned about in discussing media violence. A 1993 study from the American Psychological Association called *Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response* points out there are four serious effects of viewing media violence that have significant implications for you and your family.

Handout #7:

Distribute Handout #7, **Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence,** and review these four effects:

- *Increase in aggressive behavior and anti-social acts (Aggressor Effect)*
- *Increased fear of being a victim — the "Mean World" Syndrome (Victim Effect)*
- *Increased desensitization to violence and victims of violence (Bystander Effect)*
- *Increased desire for more and more violence in real life and entertainment (Appetite Effect)*

Discussion:

Ask group members to talk among themselves and consider the implications each of these effects has for their families. Allow about 10 minutes for small group discussion, then open it up to the group and encourage participants to share their observations. Use the following questions as examples:

The Aggressor Effect:

- *What shows are your children watching? How do they act after watching violent programming?*
- *What types of toys are we buying for our children? How do these affect their play?*
- *Has anyone you know been hurt by children imitating what they've seen on TV or in movies?*

The Victim Effect

- *Imagine a typical evening television line-up: reality show, sitcom with verbal put-downs, action-adventure TV movie, and finally the late night news. How do you feel at the end of the evening?*
- *In the past few years have you put bars on your windows? Bought a car alarm? Took a self-defense course? Thought about carrying mace? Bought a gun?*
- *Do you expect to be a crime victim at some time? How does this make you feel?*

The Bystander Effect

- *If you were to witness a mugging, what would your first reaction be?*
- *When was the last time you did something to help someone in trouble? Or are you afraid it might be a trap? Or they might hurt you?*
- *Are we losing the idea of the "Good Samaritan" in our society? How does this affect our communities? Our nation? Our world?*

The Appetite Effect

- *Do you find yourself unable to turn off a violent movie that you don't really like but find yourself watching anyway?*
- *Do your younger children beg you to take them to the latest R-rated action-adventure movie?*
- *What is your child's reaction when you suggest G-rated films?*

Summary and Closure

To end the session, summarize what has been learned in the group: media violence has far-reaching implications not just for our personal lives but for the health of our society. Read the following to prompt everyone to reflect on the importance of what's been covered:

Closing Quote:

> ***"It has been said that every society is only 20 years away from barbarism — 20 years is all that is available to help a newborn child learn the ways of society and become a productive adult."***
>
> ***- John Murray*, USA Today, *August 2, 1993***

Invite two or three people to share how the quote resonates for them as parents or caregivers.

Evaluation:

Distribute the Evaluation Form (in the *Introduction/Overview* unit, Leader's Guide A, page 22) and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

"Take a Stand":

- Review Session 2, "Take a Stand" in the *Teen/Adult* unit, Leader's Guide D. Add it as an optional session at this point in the program.

Strategize:

- Creating public understanding and awareness about the long-term effects of viewing violence is a fundamental step in mobilizing public opinion to reduce excessive media violence, especially for children. The following are just a few of the ideas you could do in your community to generate awareness. Hold a strategy session to develop and implement these or your own activities.

Form a speaking team:

- Form a task force of people who are good at public speaking and develop a presentation on the "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence" for other community groups. Another task force could develop publicity materials about the presentation and organize "bookings" with PTAs, church groups, senior citizen groups, Rotary clubs, women's organizations, etc.

Invite a psychologist:

- Invite a psychologist to speak to your group on the research that supports the "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence" as identified in the report from the American Psychological Association.

Create skits:

- Invite a group of young people to develop a skit portraying each of the "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence." Help them perform the skits at school assemblies and youth groups or for adult gatherings. Adapt the skits for television and produce them for a cable access channel or as a student video production.

Involve local media:

- Strategize ways to get local media to help publicize the "Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence." Invite a newspaper or TV reporter to visit your group and interview participants. Call in to local talk shows. Write and publish a short article in a club newsletter or church bulletin.

PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

3

Challenging the Hollywood Role Model

Concept: Media rely on stereotypes and bias to create characters according to a formula. Children identify with these characters and are influenced both negatively and positively by the behaviors and attitudes that are portrayed. Media heroes become children's role models. This may conflict with the values espoused by their parent(s) or caregivers.

Objective:
- To identify behaviors and attitudes commonly portrayed by violent characters in the media. *(Awareness)*
- To identify patterns or formulas used in portrayals of violent characters in the media. *(Analysis)*
- To compare behaviors and attitudes portrayed in the media with behaviors participants wish their children to emulate. *(Reflection)*
- To use a list of pro-social attitudes as a tool for choosing programming that reflects values parents wish to communicate to their children. *(Action)*

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media are constructions.
- Media have embedded values and points of view.

Leader Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two, read:*
  "New Heroes For A New Age: Stories of Nonviolence Inspire the Best in Us" (p.7).
- Duplicate one copy of each handout for every participant:
  Handout #8, **Hollywood Heroes/True Heroes** (you may want to use this as a transparency or enlarge it to poster size and display in front of the room),
  Handout #9, **Role Model Encyclopedia,**
  Handout #10, **What We Want To See,**
  Handout #11, **Six Ways Media Violence Affects Behavior.**
- Set up VCR and monitor. Cue videotape to Video E #3 —Role model montage.
- Practice reading aloud the *Closing Quote* or preselect a participant to prepare to read it.
- Prepare evaluation materials or copy Evaluation Form on page 22 of Leader's Guide A.

Additional Materials Needed:
- Pens or pencils for all participants
- Make sure the room arrangement is flexible to allow the large group to split into smaller groups of four to six.
- Kitchen timer

Time Required: At least one hour

INSTRUCTIONS

Review four effects: *(5 mins.)*

Invite participants to share what they may have noticed in the past week about the four effects of viewing media violence in their own lives or that of their family.

Handout #8

Distribute and/or display Handout #8, **Hollywood Heroes/True Heroes.**

Discussion:
(5 mins.)

Allow a minute or two for the group to share reactions to the cartoon. Some discussion questions include:

- *What kinds of messages do Hollywood heroes send to our kids and our society?*
- *How do our own lives fit into this picture?*

Be sure that the following point has surfaced:

- *Children see these heroes/anti-heroes repeated over and over in cartoons, movies, stories and video games, while images of "real" heroism are few and far between. In the absence of inspiring heroes, stereotypical media heroes can become our children's role models.*

Activity I:
(15 mins.)

The next activity will look more closely into the world of Hollywood heroes and other stereotypes portrayed in the media.

Handout #9:

Distribute Handout #9, **Role Model Encyclopedia,** and pens or pencils if necessary.

Give everyone a chance to read and review the handout.

Next, prepare participants to view a video montage. Be sure everyone can see the television monitor comfortably.

The montage is recorded twice on the tape. Explain that the first time through, they are to note just the gender and ethnicity of the people or characters in each segment and use the handout to tally the number of appearances.

Video E #3:

Show Video E #3 - Montage of Hollywood role models. Stop the tape and explain the second half of the activity. Watch the video again and describe what the characters are doing. Also, note the attitude they portray.

- *Are they singing? Fighting? Yelling? Helping people?*
- *Are they jealous? Selfish? Kind? Generous? Frightened?*

Show the video again, stop the tape and give participants a few minutes to finish filling in their handouts.

Large group discussion:
(10 mins.)

Invite the group to discuss the patterns that emerged. Discussion questions may include:

- *What patterns emerged?*
- *How is the girls' behavior different from that of the boys' as shown in cartoons and commercials?*
- *What are the messages that children (and adults) get from the patterns?*
- *How do these stereotypes perpetuate misinformation about gender or racial and ethnic groups?*
- *What are the implications for your children as they seek role models in the media?*
- *How do you see these stereotypes affecting your children's self-esteem?*
- *How do these behaviors and attitudes compare with role models you would like your children to be exposed to?*

Encourage the group to share their thoughts and ideas. The questions are not meant to ferret out correct answers. They are intended to inspire reflection on how issues of gender and cultural bias in the media may affect our children.

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Handout #8:
(15 mins.)

Next, distribute Handout #10, **What We Want to See.** Prompt a lively discussion by asking participants to think of attitudes they would like their children to emulate. Invite everyone to call out words as they come to mind.

After most participants have generated lists of 8-10 characteristics, prompt a discussion of where children can see these behaviors modeled. What types of media, genres or programs model these behaviors and attitudes?

Summary and Closure:
(5 mins.)

Summarize by encouraging participants to use the list they have created as a tool to gauge whether the characters in a given program engender the types of attitudes and behaviors they would like their children to learn. Make notes (it's not too late to start keeping a journal) about both positive and negative attitudes they see in media portrayals during the coming week.

Handout #11:

Distribute Handout #11, **Six Ways Media Violence Affects Behavior.** Use the handout as a checklist to evaluate the incidences of violence their children see on TV or in videos during the week.

Finally, ask participants to sit quietly or stand in a circle while you (or a preselected participant) proclaim aloud the following thoughtful quote. Invite two or three people to share how the quote resonates for them as parents or caregivers.

Closing Quote:

"Storytelling is how we organize society. Stories tell us who we are as people, where we came from and where we're going ... Young people are walking bundles of needs and anxieties on the complex path to adulthood. Stories about heroes have always been important maps for the journey, because heroes exude power and a strong sense of self, just what young people are seeking."

- Wally Bowen*, Education Week, *March 6, 1994

Evaluation Form:

Distribute the Evaluation Form (in the *Introduction/Overview* unit, Leader's Guide A, page 22) and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

Help kids analyze heroes:

- Refer to the lessons in the Elementary and Middle School Guides on helping children analyze media heroes. Share these with parent(s) who can introduce the activities to their children.

Hero cards:

- Help children make "hero cards" to collect and trade. Have them research different heroes and heroines throughout history. On one side of the card, write pertinent information such as dates of birth and death, birthplace, significant accomplishments, etc. The other side of the card should have a drawing, photocopy or tracing of the hero. The finished card can be pasted up onto standardized templates, printed on card stock and "traded." (Thanks for this project/idea to Mark Gura, Project Director/Division of Instruction and Professional Development, New York City Public Schools.)

A community project on heroes:

- Involve your community in a project to identify and lift up heroes for children to learn about and learn from. Libraries could have special exhibits of books about real heroes and heroines; the video store could identify movies and videos; churches, schools and community centers could create bulletin boards and public displays. Clubs and organizations can look around for local heroes to honor. Involve children in identifying the everyday real heroes in their lives. Ask local businesses to provide prizes or rewards for heroism. Challenge the media to cover local heroes rather than local criminals.

PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

4

Movie Ratings and Reviews: How to Make Informed Choices

Concept: How can parents get guidance for selecting and monitoring media they feel is appropriate for their children to see? Although ratings are often brought up as a solution to media violence — indeed, they are being considered for TV and video games — this activity is intended to caution parents that ratings are far from perfect and even less if parents don't use them properly. In this session, parents will develop plans for gathering and assessing critical information they need to guide their decisions in choosing media for their children.

Objectives:
- To discover what participants know and don't know about movie ratings. *(Awareness)*
- To analyze pros and cons of the current movie ratings system. *(Analysis)*
- To evaluate a series of movie reviews for what information is needed to make media choices for children. *(Reflection/Action)*

Media Literacy Principles:
- All media are constructed.
- Media have commercial implications.

Leader Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "View From the Network: What Counts as Violence?" (p.15),
  "Slasher Films May Be Kids' Introduction to Sex" (p.16).
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "What's Wrong With the Ratings?" (p.13),
  "What Other Countries Do About Ratings" (p.15).
- Duplicate one copy of each handout for every participant:
  Handout #12, **A Movie Ratings Quiz,**
  (OPTIONAL: Use the handout as an overhead transparency.)
  Handout #13, **Answers to the Ratings Quiz,**
  Handout #14, **The Nuts and Bolts of Movie Ratings.**
  (OPTIONAL: Handout #13 and #14 can be copied double-sided.)
  Handout #15, **The Hollywood Review** (copy double-sided).
- Practice reading aloud the *Closing Quote* or preselect a participant to prepare to read it.
- Prepare evaluation materials or copy Evaluation Form on page 22 of Leader's Guide A.

Additional Materials Needed:
- Pens or pencils for each participant
- Video tape

Time Required: One hour

INSTRUCTIONS

Review media heroes: *(5 mins.)*

Have a few participants share notes (from their journal if they are keeping one) about media heroes their children saw during the past week. What new insights are they gaining about how the behavior and attitude of media characters influence their children?

Handout #12:

Distribute Handout #12, **A Movie Ratings Quiz.** Or, display transparency on an overhead projector. Allow about a minute for the participants to complete the ratings quiz on their own. Move through the questions very quickly to tally up the responses without discussing any

answers. Simply go through the list allowing the participants to see how each other responded. "How many people thought number one was true?" False? etc. Tally the number of each answer on newsprint or an overhead transparency if you wish.

Handouts #13 and #14:

Distribute Handout #13, **Answers to the Ratings Quiz,** and Handout #14, **The Nuts and Bolts of Movie Ratings,** to each participant.

Discussion:
(8-10 mins.)

Return to each question on the quiz and briefly discuss it using the answer sheet along with your notes on key ideas from the two *Media&Values* articles, "What's Wrong with the Ratings?" and "Nuts and Bolts of Movie Ratings." Invite participants to share their responses and experiences using the ratings system, but do not allow the conversation to turn into a "gripe" session. If participants are particularly interested in the details of how the ratings system works, give them a few minutes to read and underline key ideas in Handout #14, **The Nuts and Bolts of Movie Ratings**. You might add that the article is from the Hollywood "insider" newsletter, *Daily Variety*, which is famous for its breezy conversational style and use of film lingo and industry jargon.

Form teams of two:
(4-5 mins.)

Summarize the quiz by inviting participants to brainstorm the pros and cons of the current movie rating system. Break the group into teams of two. Assign half the teams to think of all the positive ("pro") aspects of the current ratings system and the other half to identify the negative ("con") aspects of the system. Allow 4-5 minutes for teams to identify several ideas.

Discuss "pros" and "cons" of movie rating system:
(8 mins.)

On chalkboard, tablet paper or overhead transparency, create the headings, "Pro" and "Con." Invite one contribution from various teams until you have lots of ideas for each heading. Contribute the following concepts yourself if participants do not introduce them first.

Pro:

- *It's a national system which has basic guidelines agreed to throughout the industry from the producer who makes a film to the theater owner who shows it.*
- *Unrated films don't get publicized as well as rated ones, so even if the system is flawed, all potentially popular films do get reviewed and rated.*
- *The ratings board has made changes over the years so future changes are also possible.*

Con:

- *Ratings only alert parents that content may be inappropriate. They don't tell you what the problem content is.*
- *The system assumes all children under 13 are the same. It ignores profound variations in child development between, say, a five year old and a 12 year old.*
- *Ratings tend to focus on amount of sex, profanity or violence rather than the context of its portrayal. This results in some strange ratings:* Rain Man *with four explicit words was rated R while* Conan the Destroyer *with lots of bloody violence but no profanity, was rated PG.*
- *The system assumes that sex and profanity is "worse" than violence.*

Introduce movie review activity:

Introduce the concept that movie reviews in newspapers, magazines and newsletters, are also a source of help for parents who are trying to make entertainment choices. Say something like: *But not all movie reviews are the same! In the next activity, we'll break open what a movie review is and consider what kinds of reviews can best help us find out information and make decisions about which movies we will let our children see.*

Handout #15:

Ask participants to quickly rearrange the tables and chairs to allow them to form small groups of four or five. Distribute Handout #15, **The Hollywood Review**, to each participant.

Allow about 5-7 minutes for the groups to read each movie review. Encourage everyone to talk within the group and to underline the information they feel is most important in a review

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Small group work:
(15 mins.)

intended to help them choose appropriate movies for their children. Allow another 10 minutes for the groups to look at the reviews again, comparing the kinds of information asked for on the check list with what is provided in the handout. Then, ask each group to assign each review with a letter grade A-F.

Regroup and ask for a representative from each group to share their results with the large group.

Summary and Closure:
(5 mins.)

Summarize by encouraging participants to use this check list when reading other reviews or talking with other parents about the appropriateness of movies or videos their children want to see.

To close this session, ask participants to sit quietly or stand in a circle while you (or a preselected participant) read aloud the following excerpt from an article about the movie *Home Alone* in *The New York Times*. Invite two or three people to share how the quote resonates for them as parents or caregivers.

Closing Quote:

> ***"The action is interspersed with shots of Christmas cribs and lovely soft snowfalls. But violence is what the movie is all about — violence that would make* Rambo *blush. Against the backdrop of John Williams' beautiful original music, we learn that home is not where the hearth is but where the hot iron is. Indeed, a hot iron falls hard on the face of a man whose thuggish sidekick later threatens to chew a boy's finger off, one at a time. "Do parents often forget their kids?" my younger child asked on the way out. I looked into her sweet brown eyes, not so sure I wanted her to hear the truth. "No honey," I finally told her, "they only do that if it sells tickets."***
>
> **- The New York Times, *December 1990***

Evaluation:

Distribute the Evaluation Form (in the *Introduction/Overview* unit, Leader's Guide A, page 22) and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

Seek out alternative movie reviews:

- Encourage participants to seek out movie reviews produced through the PTA or other parent groups and religious organizations and to share reviews they like with other families or create their own and distribute throughout the community.

Investigate other ratings systems:

- Investigate the ratings systems for other media, such as records or video games. Ask a journalist or news reporter to help prepare a series of articles about what parents should know about various ratings systems. Publish the articles in a newsletter or brochure.

Promote a PSA about movie ratings:

- Ask a TV station to do a news feature story or series of public service spots to help parents know and understand the ratings. Locate a sponsor (or ask the station) to provide free copies to every library, PTA and parent group that holds an informational session for their constituency. Don't forget the "family life" ministries of area churches and temples.

Evaluate your newspaper's movie reviews:

- Form a committee to work with your local newspaper editor to evaluate the movie reviews the newspaper publishes. If the group feels that current reviews are inadequate, use positive pressure to bring change rather than condemnation or blame. Offer to evaluate different reviews from different sources. Enlist theater owners and video store owners to support the effort. Make sure your committee is well balanced with child psychologists, teachers, religious leaders and parents from many backgrounds.

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PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

5

Challenging the Myths of Media Violence

Concept: Parents and adults who are beginning to develop awareness around media violence need to practice verbalizing the information they have learned. The purpose of this session is to build confidence in responding to some of the common myths about media violence.

Objectives:
- To identify how much violence children may be exposed to. *(Awareness)*
- To develop counter arguments to the common myths of media violence. *(Analysis)*
- To practice giving responses to the common myths of media violence. *(Action)*

Media Literacy Principles:
- Audiences "negotiate meaning."

Leader Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "No Doubt About It — Media Violence Affects Behavior" (p.14).
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "Challenging the Myths of Media Violence" (p.2).
- Duplicate one copy of each handout for every participant:
  Handout #16, **A Role Play** (one copy for each *team*, cut into strips to be drawn from a "hat"),
  Handout #17, **Six Myths of Media Violence** (one copy for each participant).
- Prepare the introductory statement on blackboard, chart paper or overhead.
- Practice reading aloud the *Closing Quote* or preselect a participant to prepare to read it.
- Prepare evaluation materials or copy Evaluation Form on page 22 of Leader's Guide A.

Additional Materials Needed:
- "Hat" or cup for each team
- Arrange the room to allow the large group to split into smaller teams.
- Kitchen timer

Time Required: At least one hour.

INSTRUCTIONS

Review ratings discussion: *(5 mins.)*

Invite a few participants to share what they gained from the discussion of ratings last week. How did the session help them choose media for their children during the week? What problems did they encounter?

Introduction:

Display the following:

> *In prime-time evening shows, our children are served about 16 acts of entertaining violence (two of them lethal) every [week]night.*
> - George Gerbner, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

Ask participants: *If children watch violent prime-time television every night, Monday through Friday, how many lethal violent portrayals would they see in a week? A month? A year? By the time they reach first grade? Graduate from grade school (age 13)? Graduate from high school (age 18)?*

Form groups:

Form quick informal groups of two or three to calculate the amount of violence their children would be exposed to in the various time frames. Share their results.

Discussion:
(5 mins.)

Add: What would the implications be if we added violent promos? Saturday morning cartoons (as many as 25 acts of violence per hour)? Videos and movies? Even the news? Encourage a short discussion (no more than five minutes) to surface concerns but without getting off-track.

Then ask: *If we know that violent media can be unhealthy for us and for our children, why do we continue to allow it into our homes?* One answer is that we can get distracted from our good intentions by other people (friends, extended family members, spouses, even children) who challenge us with counterarguments or rationalizations. We might call these "myths" of media violence. Invite the group to brainstorm common myths that get in the way of parent(s) and caregivers recognizing the negative and pervasive effects of violence in the media? Allow a few minutes for ideas to surface. Quite probably the group will identify at least several of the myths included in Handout #16, **Six Myths of Media Violence**. Summarize group sharing by distributing this handout.

Handout #16:

Discussion:
(5 mins.):

Give participants several minutes to review the myths and the accompanying counter arguments.

1. *Adults say, "I saw plenty of violent movies and TV shows and I turned out OK," and kids say, "Oh, we know that stuff's not real!"*
2. *Media violence simply reflects violence in our society.*
3. *Decisions about viewing should be up to the parents.*
4. *Violence has always been a natural part of drama and some argue that watching violence can even reduce anger and violent impulses in certain people.*
5. *Writers and other creative people are free, in this country, to create any nonpornographic images they want without censorship. The U.S. Constitution guarantees it.*
6. *The marketplace simply reflects what people want. If people don't want violence they can simply turn off the TV or not spend their money on violent films.*

Explain that as we develop awareness around the issue of media violence, the next step is to share this information with others. As we mentioned in earlier sessions, the issue has finally reached families like yours and mine. Yet, not all family members will be ready to consider this issue, at the same time. Family members, neighbors, and certainly children, are likely to deny negative effects attributed to violent media. It won't be easy to convince everyone that something they have come to consider entertaining may have negative effects on society, much less on themselves. After all it's their entertainment — they see it as fun, cathartic, even relaxing.

Activity:
(30-40 mins.)

The following activity will give everyone a chance to formulate responses to six of the most commonly held myths about media violence.

First, ask the participants to split into groups of three. Assign each group member letter A, B or C.

Describe scenario:

Describe the following scenario:

> *You've just finished a lively, informative and inspiring seven-week workshop on media violence. That evening, you come home, to school, or to your neighbors' ready to share the information you learned.*

Handout #17:

Then point to or hold up one "hat" (cut-up strips, Handout #17, **A Role Play**) and say something like: *In these "hats" are several possible responses you're likely to receive. Each strip represents one of the six myths about media violence.*

Next, distribute one "hat" of cut-up strips to each group.

Explain that **Person A, the myth believer**, will pick one strip and assume one of the roles described there. Encourage him/her to completely take on that role, speaking and acting like the person would in real life.

Person B, the myth buster, will counter-argue the myth using what he/she has learned about media violence in the previous sessions along with the information on the handout. Person B should resist the temptation to read directly from the myth/fact sheet. The idea is to practice putting these ideas into their own words.

Person C, the observer, will observe Person B and offer friendly notes on the effectiveness of the counter-argument.

Groups discuss myths:
(5 mins.)

Give participants five minutes to work with each myth. Be sure to rotate roles so that each person gets to practice playing Person A, B and C several times. Encourage participants to try again if they are unsatisfied with their first attempts. Participants can help each other but inform talkative people to be patient with those who are shy or less verbal; everyone needs a safe place to practice finding answers they are comfortable with.

Circulate among the groups, listening and offering advice and support. When the first five-minute period is up, ring a bell or signal for the groups to select another myth. Make sure groups switch roles regularly and that talkative people are not dominating their groups.

Groups share responses:
(5 mins.)

After the six five-minute sessions, regroup and share responses to the exercise.

- *What was most helpful?*
- *What myth is hardest to answer?*
- *What words or phrases seemed to "gel" for each myth?*

Summary and Closure:

Summarize by encouraging participants to practice their arguments in response to the myths they are likely to hear at home and in the community.

Then share the following quote to get everyone thinking more about myth #5. Invite two or three people to share what resonates for them about the quote as parents or caregivers.

Closing Quote:

"Many of us worry about the effects of mass media, and especially of prolonged television viewing, on the character of our young people. But often we state the issue too narrowly, as when we complain that violent scenes on television produce violent behavior among its viewers…The real problem with prolonged television is the same as the problem with any form of human isolation: it cuts the person off from those social relationships on which our moral nature in large part depends…Passive, individual entertainment, whether in a drugged stupor, in a video arcade, or before an endless running TV screen, leads to self-absorption, and self-absorption in extreme doses is the enemy of moral competence, especially that form of competence that depends on our controlling our impulses."

***– James Q. Wilson in* The Moral Sense**
(The Free Press)

Evaluation:

Distribute the Evaluation Form (in the *Introduction/Overview* unit, Leader's Guide A, page 22) and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

Give a presentation:

- Prepare a short presentation on the "Six Myths of Media Violence" and present it to other community groups such as a Rotary club, senior citizen group, a "brown bag" lunch group in a workplace.

Translate "six myths" into another language:

- Translate the six myths into other languages and share the myths and the facts with parents, grandparents and caregivers from other language or ethnic groups. Send a copy of your translations to the Center for Media Literacy for further distribution nationally.

Perform kits:

- For a family camp or at an intergenerational weekend retreat, have teams make up skits to bring the myths (and their answers) to life. Involve both adults and young people of all ages in writing and performing the skits.

Explore other arguments:

- Brainstorm the arguments kids can use to pressure their parent(s) to let them view a violent program, attend a movie, rent a video or purchase an inappropriate video game. Using a similar three-person exercise, practice creating answers for each argument.

Invite a men's group to participate:

- Invite a men's group to strategize ways to work with other men, especially young fathers, to promote responsibility and self-discipline about choosing or watching action-adventure entertainment when young children are present.

Poster contest:

- Hold a poster contest to illustrate each of the "Six Myths of Media Violence." Select several winners for each myth and organize a display in a community center, church or school. Have a reception and a program to open the exhibit. Invite the media to cover it.

Publicize research:

- Publicize the figures calculated in this session on the amounts of media violence seen by participants and their families. For example:

  "Parents participating in a workshop on media violence at ___location___ *estimate that their children saw* __number__ *acts of violence in the 12 months before the workshop program..."*

  Target your publicity to challenge other parents or caregivers who do not yet take seriously the issue of media violence in children's lives.

PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

6

Taking Charge at Home

Concept: Assuming that TV, movies and video games are here to stay, parents of young children, babysitters, grandparents, daycare providers, teachers, neighbors and adult relatives need specific tools for dealing with TV and video violence. By working together, adults can tap into their own wealth of information about how to deal with the complexities of raising children in the 90's and dealing with media's influence on children.

Objectives:
- To identify three strategies to mitigate the negative effects of excessive media violence. *(Awareness)*
- To create a personal daily reminder of activities and behaviors the parents are likely to employ at home with their family *(Analysis)*
- To practice asking/talking to children about what they see in the media. *(Reflection/Action)*
- To identify criteria for choosing nonviolent videos and video games. *(Action)*

Media Literacy Principles:
- Audiences "negotiate meaning."

Teacher Preparation:

Leader Preparation
- In *Media and Violence: Part One*, read:
  "Suggestion for Parents: Children Can Unlearn Violence" (p. 19).
- In *Media and Violence: Part Two*, read:
  "Now, A Word From Mother, A Parent's Perspective on Violence in the Media." (p. 10).
- Duplicate one copy of the each handout for every participant:
  Handout #18, **Eight Tips For Parents,**
  Handout #19, **Questions To Ask While Watching TV With Kids** (you may want to use this as a transparency or enlarge to poster size and display in front of the room),
  Handout #20, **Choosing Nonviolent Media.**
- Set up VCR and monitor. Cue videotape to Video E #4 - Four clips for analysis.
- Practice reading aloud the *Closing Quote* or preselect a participant to prepare to read it.
- Prepare evaluation materials or copy Evaluation Form on page 22 of Leader's Guide A.

Additional Materials Needed:
- Pens or pencils for all participants
- Arrange the room to allow the large group to split into smaller groups
- Kitchen timer
- Large writing tablet and markers or chalkboard and chalk
- Index cards for each participant (Decorate the borders with different colored markers to create a frame on each card)

Time Required: At least one hour.

Teaching Tips
- In the course of the activity, expect that someone in the group will claim to have no trouble controlling viewing or has long since thrown out the TV. The point here is taking advantage of the positive things TV and other media offer *in addition to* controlling our children's exposure to violent images is *difficult*. Every parent needs support and concrete ideas. This session will focus on three strategies for mitigating the negative effects of violent media.
- Make handouts into large posters at full-service copy centers.

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INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction:

Begin by asking the following question:

- *Given all this information we've learned about media and violence, how are we to deal with it — really — in our homes? Who is in charge? You? The TV? Or a combination of both?*

Discussion:
(5 mins.)

Allow a few minutes for discussion about the difficulties in taking control of children's viewing. Leave room for many ambivalent feelings. These questions are not intended to chastise anyone or measure anyone's success against another's. The point is to allow the participants to recognize how difficult it can be to control media use and exposure to violent images. Assuming that TV, movies and video games are here to stay, parents, grandparents, babysitters, daycare providers, teachers, neighbors and adult relatives need specific tools for dealing with TV and video violence.

Handout #18 and index cards:

The point is not to turn off the TV all together, but, rather, to minimize exposure to the negative effects of media violence. Distribute Handout #18, **Eight Tips for Parents,** and one index card to each participant. Review the eight tips.

Record ideas:

Ask everyone to consider what they have done in the past or what they might do in the future to implement these tips in their homes or with the children they supervise. Encourage the group to offer many, many ideas. Quickly accept responses and record them on a large writing tablet.

Offer the following ideas if necessary:

- *Start a video library.*
- *Check with your local cable company about obtaining free lock boxes.*
- *Put away the remote control to avoid channel surfing.*
- *Don't turn on the TV in the middle of a show. Always choose programs in advance.*

After you have a long list of possibilities, ask everyone to choose the ideas they are willing/able to implement and write them on the index card. Encourage everyone to use the cards as a reminder by placing them somewhere visible like on a refrigerator or bulletin board at home.

Activity:
(20 mins.)

Return the group's attention to Handout #18, **Eight Tips for Parents.** The fifth tip says, "Periodically watch TV with children to share their experience of TV and to learn more about what they do and don't understand about what they see and hear." Research shows that the best thing a parent or adult can do to minimize the negative effects of media violence is to watch TV and movies with children and talk about what they see and hear. That sounds easy, but it's not always clear what parents and other caregivers should talk about.

The following activity will provide the opportunity to practice talking about media violence with children of all ages.

Handout #19:

Distribute the Handout #19, **Questions to Ask While Watching TV With Kids.** Give participants a minute or two to review the questions.

Form small groups:

Give everyone a chance to make four smaller groups. Prepare them to watch three video clips. Be sure everyone can comfortably see the monitor from within their groups.

Then, assign each group an age group: pre-school (3-5), elementary (6-10), middle school (11-13), and high school (14-18). Explain that while watching the video, everyone should imagine they, as adults, are watching the same clip with a child or young person of that age group.

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- *What does the child need to know about what he/she is viewing?*
- *What part may be confusing?*
- *Which questions on the handout can help the child or young person understand what is actually happening?*
- *Which questions get at the ideas you want to convey to that child?*

Video E #4: Show Video E #4 -Four clips. After each clip, stop the tape and allow the participants to reflect on the questions above and on the handout. Encourage them to add questions to the handout.

Continue until you have shown all three video clips. Quickly ask a representative from each group to share issues and questions that emerged from the different age groups.

Summary and Closure: Caution participants to be patient with themselves and their families when attempting to change well-established media habits. Successfully changing media habits requires "re-learning" to enjoy and appreciate nonviolent entertainment. The following handout includes criteria to use when choosing nonviolent media and other activities.

Handout #20: Distribute the Handout #20, **Choosing NonViolent Media**.

Closing Quote:

> ***"I absolutely believe in the idea that things children are exposed to are laying down patterns in their brains. And so you can't read early enough to a child, you can't talk early enough to a child, you can't love early enough for a child, you can't bring music early enough into a child's life — it becomes part of the patterning."***
>
> ***- Maurice Sendak*, Children's Video Report, *1987***

Invite two or three people to share what resonates for them about the quote.

Evaluation Form: Distribute the Evaluation Form (in the *Introduction/Overview* unit, Leader's Guide A, page 22) and ask participants to take a few minutes to fill it out. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

Publicize good ideas:

- Publicize and build on the good ideas shared by participants to manage television and other media. Start a "TV Tips" column in a PTA newsletter or church bulletin. Create a one-page flyer of "10 Tips for parents of name of school, daycare center, church, etc." Ask your local library or community center to designate a bulletin board to display the tips and invite parents and caregivers to keep adding ideas to the list.

Create radio, TV spots:

- Create TV or radio public service spots to suggest ways to manage TV and reduce children's exposure to media violence. Contact a cable access channel to produce them.

Promote skills of TV management:

- Brainstorm other dramatic ways to promote the skills of TV management and the need for parents to pay attention to the amount of media violence their children may be seeing. Consider poster contests, skits, games, etc.

Other resources:

- The Center for Media Literacy has additional resources to assist parents or parent groups in developing skills to manage TV and media in the home. ***Parenting in a TV Age*** provides instructions for four two-hour sessions for parenting education around issues of TV and children. ($27.95) ***Television and the Lives of our Children*** by Gloria DeGaetano ($10.95; ***The Parent's Guide: Use TV to Your Child's Advantage*** by Dorothy and Jerome Singer ($9.95); and *The Smart Parents' Guide to Kids' TV* by Milton Chen, Ph.D. ($8.95) are all excellent books for your home or library. Call the Center toll free at 1-800-226-9494 to order.

PARENT/ CAREGIVER SESSION

7

Challenging Media Violence: Locally, Nationally, Globally!

Concept: Challenging the pervasiveness of media violence has been the underlying theme of all previous sessions. But this session focuses directly on how to build communities to promote systemic change while at the same time, help people to realize that everything they do — from the simplest act of choosing TV with their children to organizing a letter-writing campaign — contributes to the momentum needed to challenge the media's connection to our culture of violence.

Objectives:
- To learn how grassroots awareness leads ultimately to systemic change in community-identified social issues. *(Awareness)*
- To identify resources in the community that can contribute toward programs and projects to raise community awareness around the issue of media violence. *(Analysis)*
- To understand how all efforts, small and large, contribute to the whole. *(Reflection)*
- To identify one or two projects they are willing to support. *(Action)*

Media Literacy Principles:
- Media have embedded values and points of view.

Leader Preparation:
- In *Media and Violence Part Two*, read:
  "20 Ways to Create a Caring Culture,"(p.16),
  "Grassroots Efforts Challenges Violence" (p.18),
  "Taking a Stand, A Postcard Campaign for Nonviolent Media" (p. 23).
- Photocopy one copy of the following worksheets for each participant:
  Handout #21, **Community Networking — Bubble Diagram**,
  Handout #22, **From Passivity to Engagement**.
- *Optional:* Using an enlarging copy machine, photocopy each of the "20 Ways to Create a Caring Culture" (pp. 17-19 of *Media and Violence: Part Two*) large enough to make a series of small posters to place in your meeting room or display on a bulletin board.

Additional Materials Needed:
- Pens and pencils for all participants
- Make sure the room arrangement is flexible to allow the large group to split into smaller groups
- Kitchen timer
- Large writing tablet plus markers and tape or chalkboard and chalk

Time Required: At least one hour.

INSTRUCTIONS

Inclusion:
(5 mins.)

Ask several individuals in the group to share ways their media habits have changed as a result of the preceding six lessons. Which of the TV management suggestions brainstormed in the last session proved useful?

Say something like: *There are three basic approaches to challenging — and changing — media violence in our country.*

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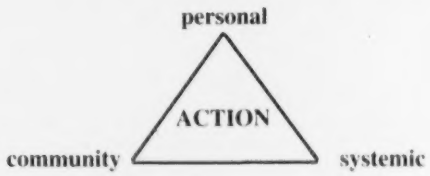
Introduction:
(10 mins.)

Draw triangle:

Draw a large triangle on the chalkboard or piece of tablet paper as shown below:



Discuss triangle:

Continue saying something like: *We sometimes think that action is what "other people" do but what we need to realize is that there are many kinds of actions and they are all important! Without change and action — in our own living rooms* (personal), *and in our local communities* (community), *not much will ever happen* systemically. *We need to keep tension on all three points or the triangle collapses.*

(Draw arrows out from the word "action" to each of the triangle points.)

For most of the previous sessions, we have concentrated on understanding the issues of media and violence and what we can each do in our own homes and with our own children. The goal of today's session is to explore ways to move beyond our living rooms and help build coalitions and networks to create change in our communities — which will help to challenge the larger system of violence in our culture.

Assure participants that just as in the previous sessions we learned to look around our own homes and living rooms to find ways to reduce media violence for our families, especially our children, we now can look around our communities for people and organizations and resources that can contribute to building greater community awareness and action.

Our goal is to widen support for the issue of reducing media violence, to replicate this experience for other parent groups, to form a nucleus for community awareness and action to help reduce the impact and influence of media violence for the young people in our community.

Handout #21:

Distribute Handout #21, **Community Networking — Bubble Diagram.** Give everyone a chance to form small groups of four to six.

Activity:
(20 mins.)

In small groups, use the bubble diagram to brainstorm personal or professional connections that can help with educational or action projects to bring about further awareness of the issues of media violence in your community.

While brainstorming consider :

Groups brainstorm:

- ***Organizations*** *in the public and private sector that could assist with projects for parents, children, youth or families. (Community centers, art education groups, women's or men's service groups.)*
- ***Community businesses*** *that have access to professional services or technology resources to support community awareness projects. (The corner copy shop, neighborhood high schools, public access cable channel.)*
- ***Religious institutions*** *such as churches, temples and synagogues that have facilities or resources to sponsor classes or community programs on media issues.*
- ***Educational institutions*** *such as local colleges, parenting education programs, Head Start, Parent/Teacher organizations, etc.*

Allow the groups 15 minutes to complete the bubble diagram with all possibilities.

Handout #22:

Next, distribute Handout #22, **From Passivity to Engagement.**

Give the participants a few moments to look over the scale. Explain that the three points of the action triangle can also form key points on a "spectrum of social change." Such a spectrum reminds us that:

- *Everyone can do something;*
- *Not everyone needs to do the same thing;*
- *All actions anywhere on the spectrum are important;*
- *People will grow and change in their participation with any social issue;*
- *It's "OK" to be wherever you are at any one time on the spectrum because you're not alone; everyone is working together for the same cause.*

Explain that millions and millions of people are needed at the "living room" stage in order to build a strong base of support for programs and activities that promote systemic change. Without a broad base of support, activists can be dismissed as "kooks" or "radical fringe." Indeed, for 40 years, the issue of media violence has not been taken seriously because there wasn't enough public support for organized action at the "living room" level.

Community-based programs are the "pivot" which connect individual actions with each other in order to create a "cause" or a "movement" that results in systemic change.

Three key points:

In order to see change through, we have to remember three things:

1. *That change will come.*
2. *That it will take time.*
3. *That everyone has to do their part.*

Offer the following as an example:

- *A community letter-writing campaign needs organizers and many individual people willing to write just one letter.*
- *Workshops, such as this one, need people willing to present in front of a group, someone willing to offer the space and many others as participants.*
- *A community-based video library needs funds to purchase videos, technical staff to catalog and maintain the collection, organizers to get the word out and individuals to use the service.*

Form teams of two:
(10 mins.)

Have participants select a partner. Using their community networking charts and the social change spectrum, the two partners should help each other determine:

- *Where they see themselves on the spectrum now;*
- *Where they might see themselves six months from now;*
- *What personal and professional resources they can connect with;*
- *What community resources are available to tap into;*
- *What one action or follow-up activity they are willing to do to get started.*

Suggest that each person make notes for themselves on the reverse side of the community cluster chart. Circle the appropriate places (now and six months from now) on the spectrum. Write down the one follow-up action they are commited to do.

Gather the group together again. Stand in a circle or sit quietly in a group. Summarize by reviewing that everyone in a community has something to offer. Know where you are. You know what you are willing and able to do. Find your place on the spectrum. Then ask yourself if you can't do a little bit more.

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Summary and Closure:
(10 mins.)

Ask two people to thoughtfully read the following quotes:

Closing Quote:

You are not expected to complete the work in your lifetime.
Neither must you refuse to do your unique part.
No work, however humble, dishonors a person.
- Talmud

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has.
- Margaret Mead

Invite two or three people to share how these quotes resonate for them. Invite those who wish to share in one sentence their action commitment. Thank everyone for attending and acknowledge those who helped make the session and the entire workshop a success.

ACTION PROJECTS TO PURSUE

Evaluate this series:

- Evaluate this series of parent education sessions, make changes needed and hold it again for another group. Invite one or two people with leadership ability in your community to collaborate with you to learn how to present the sessions. Then, each of you hold future sessions and continue to expand the leadership group.

"Speaker's Bureau"

- Identify participants who could form a "speaker's bureau" on how to help parents reduce media violence. Form another committee to do publicity and place your speakers at events with a variety of community groups. Use the speaking engagements as an opportunity to recruit participants for future *Parent/Caregiver* workshops on media violence.

Learn more about the Children's Television Act:

- Learn more about the Children's Television Act passed by the U.S. Congress in 1990 to help communities control the kind and quality of children's television programs broadcast on local television stations. A two-hour workshop designed to teach parents and community groups about this important piece of legislation is available in ***Parenting in a TV Age / A Media Literacy Workshop Kit™ for Parent Education***, $27.95 plus $3 shipping from the Center for Media Literacy, 1-800-226-9494.

Borrow from "environmental movement":

- Compare the movement to reduce media violence to the environmental movement. Use the "spectrum" chart to identify various "actions" in the environmental cause from recycling *(personal)* to organizing a referendum to remove a toxic waste dump *(systemic)*. Expand the possibilities on the spectrum chart for media violence by adapting activities you are familiar with from the environmental movement. In some ways, the concern about media violence demands a *cultural* environmental movement.

Canadian connections:

- Groups in Canada should be sure to stay in touch with efforts there to reduce violence on both broadcast and cable TV. A new code of standards went into effect January 1, 1994, and is being monitored by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). Other activities include public education and media literacy programs, working with advertisers and an annual award to recognize those who help make TV less violent. Contact the **Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission,** Broadcast Coordination, Ottawa, ON K1A 0N2.

READY-TO-COPY HANDOUT MASTERS

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To accompany Session One:
- *#1 - Awareness Cartoon*
- *#2 - Types of Media Violence*
- *#3 - Family Viewing Tally*
- *#4 - Violence Fact Sheet*
- *#5 - History of the Issue*

To accompany Session Two:
- *#6 - What Do You See?*
- *#7 - Four Effects of Media Violence*

To accompany Session Three:
- *#8 - Hollywood Heroes Cartoon*
- *#9 - Role Model Encyclopedia*
- *#10 - What We Want To See*
- *#11 - Six Ways Media Violence Affects Behavior*

To accompany Session Four:
- *#12 - The Ratings Quiz*
- *#13 - Answers to the Ratings Quiz*
- *#14 - Nuts and Bolts of Movie Ratings*
- *#15 - The Hollywood Review*

To accompany Session Five:
- *#16 - A Role Play*
- *#17 - Six Myths of Media Violence*

To accompany Session Six:
- *#18 - Eight Tips for Parents*
- *#19 - Questions to Ask While Watching TV with Kids*
- *#20 - Choosing Nonviolent Media*

To accompany Session Seven:
- *#21 - Community Networking Cluster*
- *#22 - From Passivity to Engagement*

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E **HANDOUT #1**

Awareness Cartoon

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- What are television and video bringing into YOUR home?
- Can you and the other adults in your child's life, acknowledge this influence?

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E HANDOUT #2

TYPES OF MEDIA VIOLENCE	FICTION		NON-FICTION	
	Real life *violence in real-life*	**Re-enactment** *actors recreating events from real life*	**Live Action Drama** *actors portraying violence from written scripts*	**Animated** *animation of characters in action*
Violence with a Weapon (gun, knife, club, car)				
Violence without a Weapon (hitting, pushing, punching)				
Crashes and Explosions				
Verbal Violence (threatening, yelling, insults)				

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E HANDOUT #3

Family Viewing Tally

How many TV's do you have? ____ How many VCRs? ____

How often do you rent videos? ____ Who chooses the titles? ____

YOUR TV HABITS

Where do you watch TV?

❒ living room ❒ kitchen ❒ bedroom
❒ den ❒ other ❒ never watch

When do you watch?

Before work	1 hr.	
After work	1 hr.	
During dinner	1 hr.	
After dinner	3 hrs.	
At night	1 hr.	
Always	7 hrs.	
Never	0	
TOTAL		

I mostly watch TV...

❒ alone ❒ with children
❒ with an adult

YOUR KIDS' TV HABITS

Where do they watch TV?

❒ living room ❒ den ❒ bedroom ❒ friend's
❒ daycare ❒ other ❒ never ❒ don't know

When do they watch?

Before school	1 hr.	
After school	2 hrs.	
During dinner	1 hr.	
After dinner	3 hrs.	
At night	1 hr.	
Always	7 hrs.	
Never	0	
TOTAL		

They mostly watch TV...

❒ alone ❒ with a friend
❒ with siblings ❒ with an adult

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E **Handout #3 Cont.**

YOUR TV HABITS

What do you watch?

❒ news ❒ reality shows ❒ nature shows
❒ sports ❒ soaps ❒ MTV
❒ sitcoms ❒ cartoons ❒ public TV
❒ dramas ❒ talk shows

When you're not watching...

❒ playing video/computer games ❒ playing CD's
❒ using the computer ❒ listening to the radio
❒ reading ❒ books ❒ magazines ❒ newspapers
❒ other _____

How do you watch?

❒ remote control: channel surf
❒ choose shows ahead of time
❒ turn off TV after show is finished
❒ munching snacks
❒ mute sound during commercials
❒ do something else while watching: _____
_____

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YOUR KIDS' TV HABITS

What do they watch?

❒ news ❒ reality shows ❒ nature shows
❒ sports ❒ soaps ❒ MTV
❒ sitcoms ❒ cartoons ❒ public TV
❒ dramas ❒ talk shows ❒ don't know

When they're not watching...

❒ playing video games ❒ at home ❒ at arcades
❒ using the computer/playing computer games
❒ reading ❒ comic books ❒ magazines ❒ books
❒ listening to CDs ❒ other ❒ don't know

How do they watch?

❒ use remote control: channel surf
❒ choose shows ahead of time
❒ turn off TV after show is finished
❒ munch snacks while watching
❒ mute sound during commercials
❒ do something else while watching: _____
❒ don't know

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E HANDOUT #4

Media Violence Fact Sheet

TV Viewing Habits

- In 1993, 98% of the homes in America had TV's. That's more than had telephones or indoor plumbing. One third of these homes had three or more TV sets. 87% of these homes use the remote control while watching.
- In the average U.S. home, television is on just over seven hours each day. That's approximately 50 hours per week.
- In low-income neighborhoods, television is on an average of 11 hours per day or 77 hours per week.
- In one survey of a California school district, 47% of the children, age 6 to 17, had a television set in their room.
- Only 50% of these children reported that their parents set any rules regarding their television viewing.
- *Rescue 911* is the second most popular show among 2 to 11 year olds and represents 13% of the show's viewership.
- *Teenage Mutant NinjaTurtles* is the most violent movie ever produced for children — 130 acts of violence per hour.

Availability of Media Violence

- 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. is considered the most violent part of the day, Monday through Thursday.
- Cartoons like *GI Joe, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *Batman* can have as many as 25 violent acts per hour.
- There is an average of five acts of violence each hour during prime time — Monday through Saturday, from 8-11 p.m. (or 7-10) and Sunday evening from 7-11 p.m. (or 6-10).
- Cable shows are often more violent than broadcast network shows. HBO programs showed 15 violent acts per hour. MTV showed 13 violent acts per hour. WTBS showed 19 violent acts per hour. USA showed 14 violent acts per hour.
- Movie remakes usually increase the dosage of violence:

Movie	First Release	Remake
Robocop I	32 corpses	81 corpses
Deathwish	9 corpses	52 corpses
Rambo	62 corpses	106 corpses

Sources: '92-'93 Nielsen Media Research Report of Television; The Center for Media and Public Affairs; George Gerbner, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Annenberg School for Communication/U. of Pennsylvania, 1991 Study for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting; William S. Abbott, President, National Foundation To Improve Television; "Growing Up Violent, Decades of Research Link Screen Mayhem With Increase in Aggressive Behavior" by David S. Barry in *Media&Values* #62; and "Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response," 1993 report from The American Psychological Association).

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E HANDOUT #5

History of the Media Violence Issue

1950's

Rise in youth crime and juvenile delinquency prompts congressional hearings on television violence.

June 1952
First congressional hearings on violence in radio and television and its impact on children and youth held by House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Subcommittee.

1954
Sen. Estes Kefauver, (D-Tenn), chairs hearings of Judiciary Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency on role of TV shows in youth crime. Network says no link.

1960's

Urban violence prompts more congressional hearings and government funding of research on TV violence.

1967
University of Pennsylvania begins monitoring television programming.

September 23, 1969
Report of National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence cites TV violence as contributor to society's violence problem.

1970's

Surgeon general's study prompts more congressional hearings; academic studies proliferate; court cases examine liability of TV in cases of real violence.

1972
Surgeon general's report on violence cites evidence of link between screen violence and aggressive behavior.

1975
National PTA adopts resolution demanding that networks and local TV stations reduce the amount of violence in programs and commercials (reaffirmed in 1989).

1976
American Medical Associations' House of Delegates calls TV an "environmental hazard."

1980's

Reagan-era deregulation gives media free rein; cable TV, VCR's and rise of independent networks diminish power of networks to control violence on TV.

1982
National Institutes of Mental Health study says there's a clear consensus in link between TV violence and aggression.

September, 1984
Attorney General Task Force on Family Violence says evidence is overwhelming that TV violence contributes to real violence.

1984
American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Children and Television cautions physicians and parents that TV may promote aggression.

1985
American Psychological Association Commission on Youth and Violence notes research showing link between TV violence and real violence.

1990's

Networks issue a joint statement on TV violence. Antiviolence advocates step up pressure.

1990
Simon-Glickman Television Violence Act gives three major networks an antitrust exemption so they can formulate joint policy on violence. Nothing happens.

1992
American Psychological Association study shows research on link to real violence is ignored and calls for federal policy to protect society.

December 1992
Days before the House hearings, the three major networks release joint violence policy and agree to an industry-wide conference.

- *From the* Congressional Quarterly Researcher, *March 1993.*

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E HANDOUT #6

What Do *You* See?

Preschoolers / 3-5 years old

Your world is pretty much your home and street where you live. You go to nursery school three days a week but you like to stick close to your mom or dad — and to snuggle with your favorite stuffed toy. You love stories but you can't always tell the difference between fantasy and reality. You are very literal — if you see it happening it must be true. Killer tomatoes, hands that creep unattached across the floor really frighten you. Cackling witches or groaning monsters will scare you more than "normal-looking" people who might be evil. If you see a violent act that is not punished until the very end of the show, you are not likely to connect the punishment to the original act. You watch a lot of cartoons where violence is played for laughs. You can't quite tell the difference between the shows and the commercials.

Elementary School / 6-10 years old

Your world now includes school, as well as your home. Mrs. Grandon is your teacher and she's teaching you to read and write and you're learning something new everyday. You're spending more time unsupervised but you still have to be driven everywhere or go with an adult out of the neighborhood. You're getting good at video games and you may go to a friend's house to watch TV, movies or play video games. You're likely to watch reality shows like *Rescue 911* and MTV. You are beginning to ask yourself questions about whether the things you see on TV are possible in real life. You are more affected by violence you see as "humanly" possible. You begin to focus on the behavior portrayed by kids your age, such as that of Macaulay Culkin in the *Home Alone* movies.

Middle School / 11-13 years old

Your world is getting bigger. You're cool, restless, impulsive — and itching to take a risk. At the same time, you're going through puberty and the changes in your body are really confusing! School is opening new worlds and new connections. You have a bike and you get around on your own. You've got a TV and a CD player in your room. You're searching for role models and are interested in why people do what they do. What you wear is important and you are more likely to imitate behavior in media depictions of older teenage characters — rock stars on MTV, the kids in *Melrose Place* or *Beavis and Butt-head*. With your friends, you spend a lot of time watching videos.

Teenagers / 14-18 years old

Your world has become much larger. You or your friends are driving; some have jobs with lots of spending money. Your hormones are raging! You've seen it all, having watched thousands of hours of TV for all of your life. You are a big media consumer — with your own phone plus a TV and a CD player in your room. You make your media choices pretty much on your own, spending most of your time watching videos and listening to CD's. You are more likely to imitate behavior in media depictions of young adult characters, such as those depicted in *Colors* or *Boyz 'N the Hood*.

Thanks to Renée Hobbes, Ph.D., Director of the Harvard Institute of Media Education and Barbara Wilson, Ph.D. of the University of California, Santa Barbara, for their assistance in developing this role-play activity.

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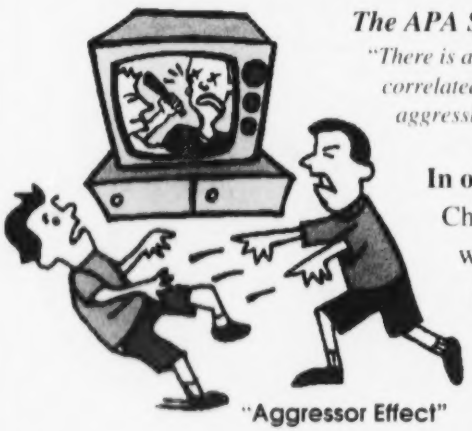
E HANDOUT #7

Four Effects of Viewing Media Violence

Does viewing violence in media contribute to violence in real life? In August 1993, the Commission on Violence and Youth of the American Psychological Association issued a major new report titled, *Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response*. The report moved the debate on the effects of media and violence from just the impact *on individuals* to the cumulative impact of media violence *on our quality of life and on society as a whole* and identifies four serious and real-life effects resulting from repeated long-term violence in mass media.

1 Increased aggressiveness and anti-social behavior.



"Aggressor Effect"

The APA Study says...

"There is absolutely no doubt that higher levels of viewing violence on television are correlated with increased acceptance of aggressive attitudes and increased aggressive behavior."

In other words...

Children who watch a lot of violence are more likely to imitate what they see on TV (Ninja chops, sword and gun play, fist fights, etc.). Aggressive children who have trouble in school and in relating to peers tend to watch more TV. The violence they see there reinforces their tendency toward aggressiveness and compounds their academic and social failures. If children do not have a strong support system to learn to handle anger and balance aggressiveness, they can establish lifelong patterns of aggression which may result in adult crime, cruelty to others (e.g., abuse) and overall mean-spiritedness.

2 Increased fear of becoming a victim.

The APA study says...

"Viewing violence increases fear of becoming a victim of violence, with a resultant increase in self-protective behaviors and increased mistrust of others."

In other words...

Watching excessive amounts of media violence can make people think their communities are more dangerous than they really are. People who watch a lot of media violence tend to put bars on their windows, worry about locks and security systems and vote for more prisons and police. If we fear going out at night, we tend to stay home where we watch more TV violence, thus perpetuating the paranoia. This fear of the outside world is sometimes called the "Mean World" Syndrome.

"Victim Effect"

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3 Increased desensitization to violence and victims of violence.

The APA study says...

"Viewing violence increases desensitization to violence, resulting in a calloused attitude towards violence directed at others and a decreased likelihood to take action on behalf of the victim when violence occurs."

"Bystander Effect"

In other words...

Excessive exposure to media violence may produce a psychological blunting of normal emotional responses to violent events. It may also lead to a lack of responsiveness in real life to people who have been hurt or who are in trouble. A major question that arises from this effect is, "are we in danger of losing one of the fundamental principles of human civilization — concern for our neighbor?"

4 Increased appetite for more violence in entertainment and real life.

The APA Study says...

"Viewing violence increases viewers' appetites for becoming involved with violence or exposing themselves to violence."

In other words...

Viewers who watch violence grow in their ability to tolerate more and more violence as part of media entertainment. They also tend to expose themselves to dangerous and violent situations in real life; for example, carrying weapons or abusing drugs or alcohol. But all of us have come to expect a certain level of violence in storytelling and we don't feel satisfied unless we get it. Children beg us to take them to the latest action-adventure movies even if they are rated "R." When they go out to play, they imitate the violence they see in the media, turning it into a game — until somebody gets hurt.

"Appetite Effect"

Find out more about the four effects of viewing media violence.

For a copy of the American Psychological Association's recent report, *Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response*, write to: APA, Public Interest Directorarte, 750 First St., NE, Washington D.C., 20002-4242. Or call (202) 336-5500. Sample copies are free. Additional copies are $4.

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E **HANDOUT #8**

Hollywood Heroes / True Heroes

TYPICAL JOBS: private eye, renegade cop, mercenary, hooker.

A TYPICAL DAY WOULD INCLUDE: killing somebody, fighting somebody, drinking to excess, gambling, random sex, reckless driving, more killing.

A TYPICAL DAY WOULD NOT INCLUDE: changing a diaper, recycling.

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TYPICAL JOBS: teacher, police officer, physician, carpenter, musician, machinist, small business owner.

A TYPICAL DAY WOULD INCLUDE: hugging somebody, coaching a kids' team, volunteering in the community, helping with homework, reading a bedtime story.

A TYPICAL DAY WOULD NOT INCLUDE: hitting anyone, shooting anyone.

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E HANDOUT #9

Role Model Encyclopedia

	Number of times they appear	**Behavior** What are the characters/ people doing?	**Attitude** Are they jealous? Evil? Honest? Generous?
Boys/Men			
Girls/Women			
African Americans			
Hispanics			
Caucasians			
Asians			
Middle Easterners			
Other			

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What We Want to See

Attitudes we want our children to emulate...

generosity

honesty

forgiveness

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E HANDOUT #11

Six Ways Media Violence Affects Behavior

Media violence is more likely to be imitated if...

1 ...the logical consequences are omitted. For children, the lack of punishments or other negative consequences act as a sanction or reward for violent behavior.

2 ...the violent act is more realistically portrayed or is more physically possible (as in being hit with a beer bottle rather than a torpedo).

3 ...the violent acts are portrayed as normal, necessary and admirable. So called "good"guys commit twice as many violent acts as do villains.

4 ...the act is presented as justified — as the "right" thing to do or as the only alternative.

5 ...children can identify with the person, the circumstances or the feelings of the person committing a violent act.

6 ...children or adults are exposed to repeated portrayals of media violence. Excessive exposure blunts response to violence in general, making it appear as an ordinary part of life.

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E HANDOUT #12

A Movie Ratings Quiz

1. A movie rated "G" means the film is suitable for all age groups. T F

2. "PG" means a movie may have scenes that children would not understand. T F

3. "PG-13" means a movie is OK for kids under 13 to see if parents go with them. T F

4. A movie automatically receives an "R" rating if it contains nudity, violence or profanity. T F

5. Movie ratings apply to all versions of a movie whether shown in a theater, on TV or available for rental at a video store. T F

6. In general, the current movie ratings system evaluates movies according to what is harmful to children. T F

7. In general, the current movie ratings system tends to be stricter about sex than about violence. T F

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E HANDOUT #13

Answers to the Ratings Quiz

 # 1 is true.
According to the MPAA, a G-rated film does not contain nudity, sex scenes or drug use. There may be mild objectionable language but little violence.

#2 is false.
The PG icon does not say children would not understand scenes in a movie but that "some material (in this movie) may not be suitable for children."

#3 is false.
The "PG-13" rating states clearly: "Parents Strongly Cautioned" that "some material may be inappropriate for children under 13." It says nothing about it being OK if parents go with them.

#4 is false.
"Nudity," "violence" and "profanity" are ambiguous. A film could have all three and still be rated PG-13 or even PG. It depends on the *amount* and *kinds* of profanity, as well as the *intensity* of the violence or the sexual *context* of the nudity.

#5 is false.
Ratings only apply to the version of a movie to be released in movie theaters. Scenes removed from a theatrical release could be restored in the video version.

#6 is false.
The ratings board consists of 11 people who are all parents. They assign a rating according to what they believe other parents would consider *inappropriate* viewing for children. There is no input necessarily from child development experts who could evaluate aspects of a movie that could be *harmful* to children.

#7 is true.
Movies containing substantial violence may be rated as low as PG — *Home Alone*, for example. But, nudity almost always guarantees a PG-13 rating and more intense sexual scenes will get an "R."

MPAA Ratings Symbols

G GENERAL AUDIENCES
All Ages Admitted

Contains no sex scenes, profanity, nudity or drug use.

PG PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED
SOME MATERIAL MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

May contain some profanity, nudity and/or violence, but no drug use or explicit sex.

PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13

May contain some profanity, nudity, violence, scenes of drug use or sexual scenes. Between PG and R.

R RESTRICTED
UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN

Contains tough violence, sexual scenes, profanity and/or drug use.

NC-17 NO CHILDREN UNDER 17 ADMITTED

Patently adult film. Children are not admitted.

MPAA symbols reprinted with permission of the Motion Picture Association of America.

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DAILY VARIETY

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THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF MOVIE RATINGS

By TIMOTHY M. GRAY

LOS ANGELES — The Classification & Ratings Administration is under the jurisdiction of the Motion Picture Assn. of America (MPAA) and its semi-silent partner, the National Association of Theater Owners (NATO). It consists of two separate arms: the rating board, which classifies films, and the advertising code, which approves or disapproves all ads and press material.

The rating board has 11 members, "all parents themselves experienced the difficulties of determining their own youngsters' moviegoing," according to chairman Richard Heffner (who's also university professor of communications and public policy at Rutgers U.) They assemble in L.A. for two or three screenings every day (sometimes more); there's no official quorum, but Heffner says, "We've never gone below five or six. I firmly believe there is safety in numbers."

As soon as the film ends, there is a "green ballot," a green piece of paper that asks, "Do you think most American parents will want this film restricted or not? If yes: R or NC-17/ If not: G, PG or PG-13? Write your reasons."

When a producer asks about reasons for the rating, "We always try to be helpful," says Heffner, "but sometimes we simply cannot be as specific as filmmakers want us to be. We're not film editors, and don't pretend to be."

If after two edits (which means the raters will have seen the film three times) the producers don't get what they want, they may have to wait at least 30 days for another screening, to give the raters time to cool off. ("Raters may get gaga about their ability to be as shocked as parents seeing a film for the first and only time," says Heffner).

Appeals Board

If unhappy, the filmmakers have alternatives: to release the film unrated/self-rated, or to appeal. The appeals board consists of 14 to 20 reps from exhibs and major and indie distribs.

Heffner: "There is a language rule and a drug-use rule. They're imposed upon us by the industry, meaning NATO and the MPAA":

1. Language - Even one use of any of the "harsher, sexually derived words" guarantees at least an initial PG-13, even if the word is used as an expletive. The film gets an initial R if the Word is used in a sexual sense, or used more than once. The exception: if the board believes a lesser rating is more appropriate and votes by 2/3 majority, the film can get another rating.
2. Drug content. If there is any drug-use reference, the film is guaranteed at least a PG-13, with 3/4 majority needed to overturn it.

Despite rumor, there are no automatic rules regarding nudity, sexual encounters or violence. Heffner says, "Rules make decisions easy, but they rob it of reason" and the policy that works best is the rule of reason.

The advertising administration reports only to MPAA topper Jack Valenti.

According to senior VP, administration/director of advertising Bethlyn Hand, when a film is submitted for rating, "One contingency is that the distributing or producing company will submit any and all advertising and publicity for approval" before it's shown to the public.

All TV and newspaper advertising must be suitable for general audiences. Trailers can be suitable for general audiences, or restricted (but the latter can only play in theaters showing R and NC-17 films. Even the smallest newspaper ad has to carry notice of the film's rating. The same is true of trailers; the only exceptions are "teasers," those coming attractions that are filmed before the pic is completed.

Four Powerful Mothers

The ad department is L.A.-based. Hand says, "I have a staff of four mothers," with low turnover, since "it's a long, educational process."

There are no absolutes, says Hand. "We can't give a list of do's and don'ts." Most distribs' ad departments understand the needs, but try to "put in something a little different" which means, according to Hand, that "nine out of 10 times, something will be disapproved" the first time around. She says, "If there's a problem, we all come in," and they will call the studio within 24 hours.

Timothy M. Gray writes for Daily Variety.

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E HANDOUT #15

NEW!
Movie Review Checklist Page 2

The Hollywood Review

EVERYONE'S GUIDE TO READING MOVIE REVIEWS

Forrest Gump Not Suited for Youngsters

Tom Hanks is wonderful in "Forrest Gump" (PG-13), but this is not a film for children and young adolescents. Older adolescents will probably enjoy Forrest and his view of the world.

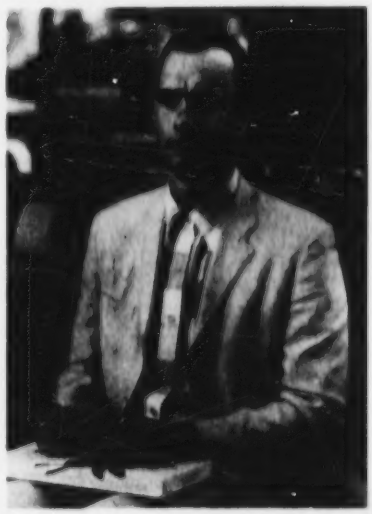
Forrest's mother and Jenny are positive influences on him, giving him strength and optimism. Even though he is slightly retarded, he is lucky. Without realizing how it happens, he manages to become a high school football star, get through college, join the Army, become a war hero, start a business and get rich. Along the way, he provides a simple view of the events of the 1950's through the 1980's.

There are several themes which are inappropriate for children and young adolescents. One is the use of sex as a manipulative tool. Forrest's mother gets him into public school by having sex with the principal, while Forrest sits outside the house and listens. When the principal leaves the house, he tells Forrest, "Your mother really cares about your education." There are other sexual themes, as well. Jenny is a victim of incest as a child and a victim of physical abuse by her lover as an adult. Jenny also sings nude in seedy bars, becomes suicidal, gets involved with drugs, and has a child out of wedlock.

The film includes several scenes which are violent or may be upsetting to children. Forrest's experiences in Vietnam include war scenes depicting gory injuries and deaths. Men are shot, bombed, catch fire, have limbs amputated and die. The violence is just too intense for children. While the theme of death is not inappropriate for children, Forrest must deal with too many deaths, including three significant people in his life — his best friend in Vietnam, his mother and Jenny.

The film does have some positive messages for older adolescents. They will see a man who, despite his disabilities, becomes a hero and possesses the strengths of optimism and generosity. Although Forrest has limited intellectual powers, he has a simple but compelling moral and philosophical view of life that was taught to him by his mother.

Adolescents will see history through Forrest's eyes. For instance, President Kennedy speaks to Forrest in old news footage enhanced with computerized special effects. It is entertaining, humorous and a bit educational.



Forrest Gump has fine acting, an engrossing story and innovative special effects. Older adolescents will probably enjoy the film, although it would be helpful for parents to discuss some of the controversial themes with them. Leave the children and younger adolescents at home.

This review by child psychologist, Barbara Mack, Ed.D., appeared in the Las Vegas Sun, *July 11, 1994. For more information on her weekly review service, contact her at 2934-1/2 Beverly Glen Circle, #242, Los Angeles, CA 90077; (310) 205-0685.*

Baby's Day Out is No Big Day Out

Nine-month-old Baby Bink is abducted from his wealthy parents by three inept crooks who lose the child and then meet with a great deal of physical pain while trying to get him back. Bink is oblivious as he crawls into a construction site, a bus, a cab, and gorilla cage. If you have children, they might enjoy Bink and his one-day adventure through Chicago. But if they are so easily entertained, isn't a few hours of watching Barney free?

From the San Francisco Bay Guardian, *July 28, 1994*

Mayhem as Usual in *Beverly Hills Cop III*

The street-smart Detroit cop Axel Foley takes his fast-talking act back to Southern California yet again to track down killers who are counterfeiting money. This time, the catch is that the trail leads to a Disney-style amusement park where the rides are a big part of the action.

VIOLENCE: From the opening moments — a bloody massacre set to a Supremes song — to the finale in the park's dinosaur ride, bullets fly and bodies fall.

SEX: Guns — the bigger, the better — seem to be more attractive than the women to the guys.

PROFANITY: The vulgarities run neck and neck with the violence.

From *The New York Times*, Sunday, June 12, 1994.

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The Mask

Computer animators take the already elastic face and body of newly minted box-office kingpin Jim Carrey and stre-e-e-tch them like a piece of bubble gum in the F/X comedy, *The Mask*. Carrey's a meek bank employee who finds a mask that endows him with both superpowers and a very mischievous personality, which he uses to rob his employers and seduce the slinky chanteuse of his dreams. Filmed with bright, poppy colors and created [camera] angles that shout "comic book," *The Mask*, with its literally cartoon violence, makes for a very cool, hot-summer-afternoon diversion.

San Francisco Bay Guardian, *August 31, 1994*

Forrest Gump

This is a movie that feels awfully important. Maybe that's because it places its main character in the center of so many of the important events of the last 40 years. Forrest appears with three presidents, teaches Elvis the moves, goes to Vietnam, speaks at an antiwar rally, and brings love and serenity into the lives of people he meets. Forrest has only one problem — his IQ is below 80. This makes him a figure of perfect innocence, a state of grace it seems American audiences are desperate to attain. Tom Hanks turns in a gorgeous performance; Gary Sinise makes us believe his character's anger when Forrest changes his destiny. Director Robert Zemeckis gives the movie the soft edges of a well-loved fable.

San Francisco Bay Guardian, *August 31, 1994*

Speed

From grunge to brawn, Keanu Reeves makes a surprisingly credible transition to action hero in this pumped-up thriller. He's Jack Traven, a daredevil LAPD cop on SWAT detail who saves a bus that's set to explode if the driver lets it drop below 50 mph. It's gooney, hyperbolic and outrageously improbable — a comic book good time.

The San Francisco Chronicle, *Sept. 25, 1994*

Three Ninjas Kick Back

More of the original. Three brothers still trained in the martial arts by their wise Japanese grandfather. When he runs into trouble in Tokyo, they come to his aid. In a nod to feminism, they are joined by a Japanese girl champion. She teaches them ninja tricks, they teach her basketball.

VIOLENCE: For a movie celebrating kicks to the groin, the violence is surprisingly muted. The doltish bad guys are right out of the Three Stooges school of hard knocks. Sound and fury, but no blood on the floor.

SEX: Not.

PROFANITY: The effects of eating beans is the level of humor we're talking here. And "butt" is played heavily for laughs.

FOOTNOTE: When it's over, be prepared for a lot of karate-kicking on the sidewalk outside.

The New York Times, *Sunday, May 15, 1994*

Baby's Day Out

Baby Bink, [a] 9-month-old child...is kidnapped by three hoods posing as photographers. But Bink escapes through an open window while one of the stooges is sleeping. Parents may find the premise of a baby crawling through the streets of Chicago distinctly unfunny; children, however, may see it as *Home Alone* in diapers. Bink...is impervious to harm. As he crawls past speeding cars and heedless shoppers, the film underscores the invisibility of children in our culture. But even four-year-olds will spot the hole in this plot: a city of hapless adults couldn't help noticing a baby this cute. Endless, repetitive, bone-crunching wounds are inflicted on the bad guys. It looks too realistic to be painless and yet it's the kind of movie violence that leads children to think it doesn't really hurt to be hit in the crotch with a 2 by 4. On the kidnapping: Bink never looks upset, so it doesn't seem scary.

The New York Times, *Sunday, July 10, 1994*

✓ Movie Review Checklist

Compare the various reviews. How do they differ? How do the reviews help or hinder you in making entertainment decisions?

Yes	No	N/A	
			Ask Yourself: **How is the violence described?**
❑	❑	❑	Is the violence graphic?
❑	❑	❑	Is the violence portrayed off-screen?
❑	❑	❑	Is the violence cartoon or live action?
❑	❑	❑	Is the violence portrayed along with its logical emotional, physical and financial consequences?
			Ask Yourself: **What is the context of the violence?**
❑	❑	❑	Is the violence played for laughs?
❑	❑	❑	In the reviewer's estimation, is the violence used to add excitement?
❑	❑	❑	In the reviewer's estimation, is the violence portrayed as part of a valuable story about human relationships?
			Ask Yourself: **How is the movie marketed?**
❑	❑	❑	Is the movie marketed to (and reviewed for) children or families, despite its rating or portrayal of violence?
❑	❑	❑	Are toys or other products for children being marketed along with the movie?

Ask Yourself: **Who are the victims of the violence?**

❑ adults ❑ men ❑ a particular racial or ethnic group

❑ children ❑ women

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E HANDOUT #16

A Role Play

Cut this page into six strips. Provide each group one set of strips and a box or "hat" to draw from.

MYTH #1: Media violence doesn't really affect anyone.

A kid: "Mom, I'm not a baby. I know it's not real. You want me to watch baby shows. Besides — I'm not violent."

Spouse: "Oh c'mon. Violence is everywhere. I watched violence on TV when I was a kid — I turned out O.K. The next thing you know you're gonna say we can't watch *Bambi*."

MYTH #2: Media violence simply reflects the real violence in our society.

Neighbor: "The world **is** getting more and more violent. Of course the news is going to report it. Besides, I want to know what's going on so I can protect myself."

Teenager: "There's violence everywhere! TV didn't make it up. They're just showing us what's really happening."

MYTH #3: Violence is a natural part of drama.

Teenager: "Hey, violence is entertaining. Movies without violence are boooo-ring."

Single Parent: "Watching violence on TV and playing video games is better than running the streets. This way they get it out of their system — safely, here at home."

MYTH #4: Decisions about viewing media violence should be up to parents.

Business person: "Producers are just trying to make a living. They can't be responsible for protecting kids. What kids watch is up to the parents."

Neighbor: "Parents need to keep better track of what their kids are doing. You can't ask the television networks to do it for them."

MYTH #5: The Constitutions guarantees media-makers freedom from censorship.

Adult friend: "I personally think all the violence is awful. But I don't want censorship either. The right to make this stuff is written into the Constitution."

Kid: "Hey, Dad. This is a free country. Anybody can say anything they want."

MYTH #6 Violence is what people want to see.

Grandparent: "Personally, I don't like the violence either. But somebody must like it, or the movie and TV people wouldn't make it."

Spouse: "I say, whatever the market will bear ... If people like it, the studios are going to keep serving it up."

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E HANDOUT #17

The Six Myths of Media Violence

The following six myths are often given as reasons about why we can't do anything about challenging or reducing media violence. Like all myths, they seem to make sense at first. But a closer look reveals the simplistic reasoning behind each one that short-circuits serious debate and rationalizes doing nothing.

Myth #1 I saw lots of violence when I was a kid and I turned out OK.

Response: Psychologists tell us that even those who do not themselves become aggressive are still affected by viewing violence over many years. Some become so mistrustful of others they end up victims of the *fear of violence*. Others become so callous, they *turn their back* on a neighbor in need. In still others, viewing violence creates a craving for *more and more conflict*, in both entertainment and real life.

Indeed, the more serious long term effect of media violence may not be that some people become mass murderers, but that people gradually adopt patterns of bullying and meanness in everyday attitudes and actions.

For centuries people learned who they were and how they should behave through the stories they were told as children. Today, high-tech special effects make it possible to re-create violent imagery never before seen in human history. Children today are not growing up in the same world their parents did. The powerful images of mass media storytelling reinforce the myths, beliefs and attitudes of a *culture of violence*.

So the issue is not just whether we as individuals turn out OK, but whether our *society* turns out OK.

Myth #2 Media violence simply reflects what's going on in real life.

Response: Media messages are much more than mirrors of society. In their very reflection and repetition they also reinforce, amplify and often distort. Research repeatedly shows that sensationalized news coverage of murders, rapes and disasters is far out of proportion to their frequency in real life. And more than ever before, the line between news and entertainment is increasingly blurred with "reality" shows that stage edited re-enactments of real situations, and "docudramas" only loosely based on real events.

While adults may be able to distinguish the real from the fictional, children often cannot. Frequent violence sends children a distorted message: that violent behavior is an easy and acceptable way to express anger and resolve conflict.

And the lessons are learned. The rate of arrests for serious crime by children under 15 increased *11,000 percent* between 1950 and 1980. It's still climbing today.

Myth #3 Violence is a natural part of drama. Some argue that watching violence can reduce anger and violent impulses in certain individuals.

Response: There is a vast difference between the bodies on the stage at the end of *Hamlet* and the human debris left after one of today's "superheroes" blows through a blockbuster movie or videogame players spend a few hours "wasting" their opponents.

What is important for *catharsis* in drama is the resolution of human *conflict*. In great drama, violence occurs only to portray the rise and fall of a character who eventually recognizes and regrets her or his terrible acts.

In contrast, today's action adventure entertainment makes violence an end unto itself. Those who use violence are not human beings who feel remorse; they're simply killing machines. Those who care for children should be deeply aware of the potential implications of exposing children to such violence and particularly about characters portrayed as heroic simply *because* they are violent.

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Myth #4 Decisions about viewing media violence should be up to parents.

Response: The stream of media images flowing continually into the average household can be overwhelming. So parents today have a daunting task. Unlike parents of the past, they must develop and practice new parenting skills in order to help their children gain self-discipline in use of the media and learn to critically evaluate the media messages that bombard them daily.

But parents also have a right to expect society to support their child-rearing efforts with public policies that reduce risks to children. Teddy bears and children's pajamas are subjected to more safety standards than are the TV shows that entertain our children for hours each day. An African proverb states: "It takes a whole village to raise a child." We are all responsible for the cultural environment in which today's children are growing up. That includes the media makers and media owners who control what goes out over the public airwaves or floods our cultural landscape in the images of pop culture. They must behave responsibly as good corporate citizens. And they need to be steadfastly challenged when they do not.

Myth #5 We live in a country that constitutionally protects free speech. Personally, I don't like violence in the media but I don't want censorship either.

Response: Of course, the First Amendment must be preserved and protected. However, there is clear legal precedent that when the safety of the public is involved, discretion is required. What is to be done when one person's free speech endangers another's personal safety? There is good reason why we can't yell "fire" in a crowded theatre.

This issue of censorship boils down to whether portrayals of violence in media create a danger for the public. Researchers and psychologists say there *is* evidence of harm from the cumulative viewing of violence, especially for children. Others reject these studies as unproved. The result is an endless debate that's been going on for over 40 years. Perpetuating it only serves to silence public conversation about larger issues: what kind of "cultural environment" do we want our children to grow up in? What is the role of art and media and entertainment in imaging that future?

Over the past decades, media images have changed to reflect what the public considers acceptable or not in the realm of art. Long gone, for example, are *Amos 'n Andy* stereotypes of African Americans as well as many negative images of women. Depictions of smoking, alcohol and drug use are now closely scrutinized. Gruesome and gratuitous violence can easily be added to the list of creative elements media makers carefully evaluate. Censorship will no longer be a concern when public opinion makes exploitative violence unacceptable as entertainment.

That, too, is the American way.

Myth #6 Violence is what people want to see. If some people don't want to see it they can turn off the TV or not spend their money on violent videos, games or movies.

Response: A check of the ratings for almost any week of television reveals that over the decades, comedies such as *Cheers*, *The Bill Cosby Show*, or *Home Improvement* regularly command the biggest audiences. But unlike other media use, television viewing is a ritual in people's lives, replacing reading or visiting with friends as a way to fill up leisure time. It is said that most people watch "by the clock" rather than by the program. TV is there at birth and stays on, in the average hoursehold, over 7 hours a day throughout life. Violence, as the staple element in formula dramas and movies, coasts on viewer inertia rather than outright choice.

In terms of movies, videos and games that do have to be purchased, it is naive to suggest that a profit-driven media marketplace merely reflects what people want. By its nature the marketplace also creates demand for products, often for things we never thought we "needed."

Violence in entertainment (including sports) is used as a marketing strategy by multinational media corporations whose products must "travel" across many languages and cultures. The primary audience is adult males 18-49 who are most likely to have the money to spend at the box office or on the advertised products that support violent programs on television. Despite objections by many women and by child advocates, murder and mayhem have become staples of entertainment media because they attract and appeal to this age group.

Violence — both in media and in real life — may not be America's finest export, but it's our most visible one. Reversing the demand both at home and abroad may be one of the great challenges for the 21st century.

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E HANDOUT #18

Eight Tips for Parents

How to Control Your Child's Exposure to Media Violence

1 Set guidelines about what is appropriate viewing in *your* family. Apply guidelines to all media: TV, cartoons, videos, movies, videogames, magazines and comic books.

2 Help children select programs within your family's guidelines. Seek to *add* positive programs while limiting negative ones.

3 Be aware of what children are watching outside your home. Communicate your standards to neighbors, grandparents, babysitters and others who may care for your child or children. Ask for their cooperation in limiting violent viewing.

4 Be a good role model when making your own viewing selections.

5 Periodically watch TV with children to share their experience of TV and to learn more about what they do and don't understandabout what they see and hear.

6 Use a VCR to tape appropriate entertainment for children to watch alone.

7 Encourage children to become involved in a variety of leisure activities other than TV, videos and videogames.

8 Talk about TV management with other parents; share tips and provide support for one another; challenge those who are still apathetic.

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E HANDOUT #19

Questions to Ask While Watching TV with Kids

Consequences of Violence

1. What would happen in real life as a result of this violence?
2. Who would be sad? Who would cry?
3. Who would fix everything that has been broken? Who would pay for the damage? How much would it cost?
4. Who would have to go to the emergency room? How long would it take to be seen by a doctor? How long would he/she have to stay in the hospital? Who would pay the doctor bills?
5. If the people die, how would their families feel? How would it change their lives?
6. What would happen if you tried that at home?
7. What would you do and how would you feel if you saw this happen in real life?

Good Guys/Bad Guys and Heroes

1. Why do the "bad" guys use violence?
2. Why do the "good" guys use violence?
3. Why are they fighting, chasing or shooting each other?
4. Who hits first? Who hits back? Why? Are they looking for revenge? Is the violence solving their problems?
5. Do the "good" guys think they can do anything they want just because they are the good guys?
6. Are there any limits to what the "good" guys will do to protect people?
7. Will the "good" guy"ever go to jail for killing people? Who is the more violent — the good guys or the bad guys?

Reality vs. Fantasy

1. The people you see are pretending. They are paid to act this way. How can you tell?
2. Most of what you see is fake. Think of as many things as you can that are fake. For example, the guns are all plastic. The blood is red dye or the furniture is easy to break. The fight scenes are all choreographed — they plan it first so each person knows exactly when and where to move or fall down.

Glamorization of Violence

1. Why is this kind of violence shown on TV and in the movies? Why do some people think violence is entertaining?
2. Do the characters seem to enjoy violence? Does the violence make them seem "cool?"
3. What kinds of lives do the characters live? Do they work? Do they have families? Do they always wear the latest fashions? Do their clothes ever get dirty? Are they rich? Do they have jobs? Where do they live?
4. Do we admire the characters no matter how violent they become?
5. Does music play during real-life fights?
6. If this scene was left out, how would it affect the story?

Real-Life Coverage/Re-enactments

1. Why do TV producers go to the trouble of re-enacting these scenes?
2. If the same thing happened to you, would you want a camera crew photographing you?
3. Are there places that TV cameras shouldn't be allowed to go?
4. We're watching only part of the whole story. Why do you think this part was chosen to be on TV? What parts of the story are missing? What do you think will happen next?
5. Does watching help solve the problem we see?
6. Why would people behave like this? What do you think people learn by watching this?

Stereotypes/ Roles Models

1. Are the violent characters more often men or women? What languages do these characters speak? Are they African American, Caucasian, Hispanic, Asian, Middle Eastern?
2. What are the women wearing during the fight scenes? What are the men wearing during the same scenes?
3. Who is killed — women or men? Older or younger people? What is the race or ethnicity of the people who get killed?

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E HANDOUT #20

Choosing Nonviolent Media

Choosing the Right Video Games

- Look for games that are **truly interactive.** Challenging quest games are ideal, since they require open-ended exploration, the use of sequential logic, trial and error, and predicting outcomes.
- Look for games that **broaden the child's knowledge of the world**. For instance, the *Carmen Sandiego* games lead to an exploration of geography and history of the world.
- Look for games that **develop skills** that will be carried forward into adult life and work. Games that require problem-solving effort, record keeping and organization of information, will lead to skill development that is transferable to other activities.
- Look for games that **reflect your family value system** and that link that child to the culture of the real world. Choose games that increase your child's understanding of conflict resolution, cooperation, and appreciation of other cultures and viewpoints.
- Look for games that will **spur the child's curiosity** and creativity. Simulation games are ideal for this because they immerse the child in another world and the child gets to manipulate and co-create that reality.

Gloria DeGaetano, M.Ed., Television and the Lives of our Children: A Manual for Teachers and Parents, *Train of Thought Publishing, 1993. Reprinted with permission.*

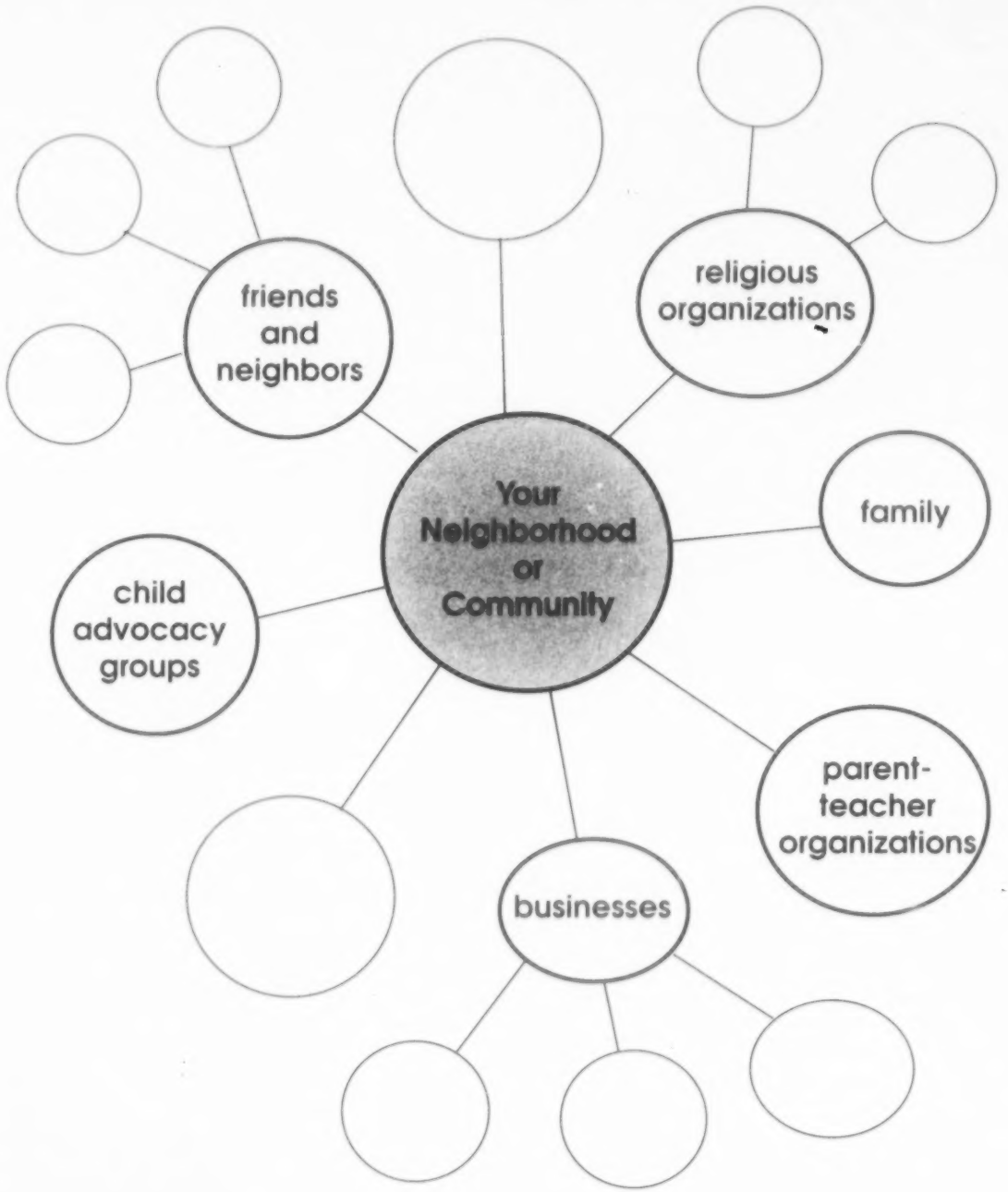
Qualities of a Good Video

- A universal sense of appeal; a good story appeals to all ages.
- A sensitive portrayal of the human condition.
- The ability to move its audience — to tears or laughter.
- The ability to evoke thoughtful discussion.
- Technical excellence and artistic expression.
- Educational or informational in content.
- No glamorized violence or stereotypes.
- Makes us better people for having watched it.
- Makes us want to recommend it to loved ones.
- Represents cultural and ethnic diversity.

For information on quality video titles recommended by professional librarians, contact the American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL. 60611; 1-800-545-2433.

E HANDOUT #21

Community Networking - Bubble Diagram



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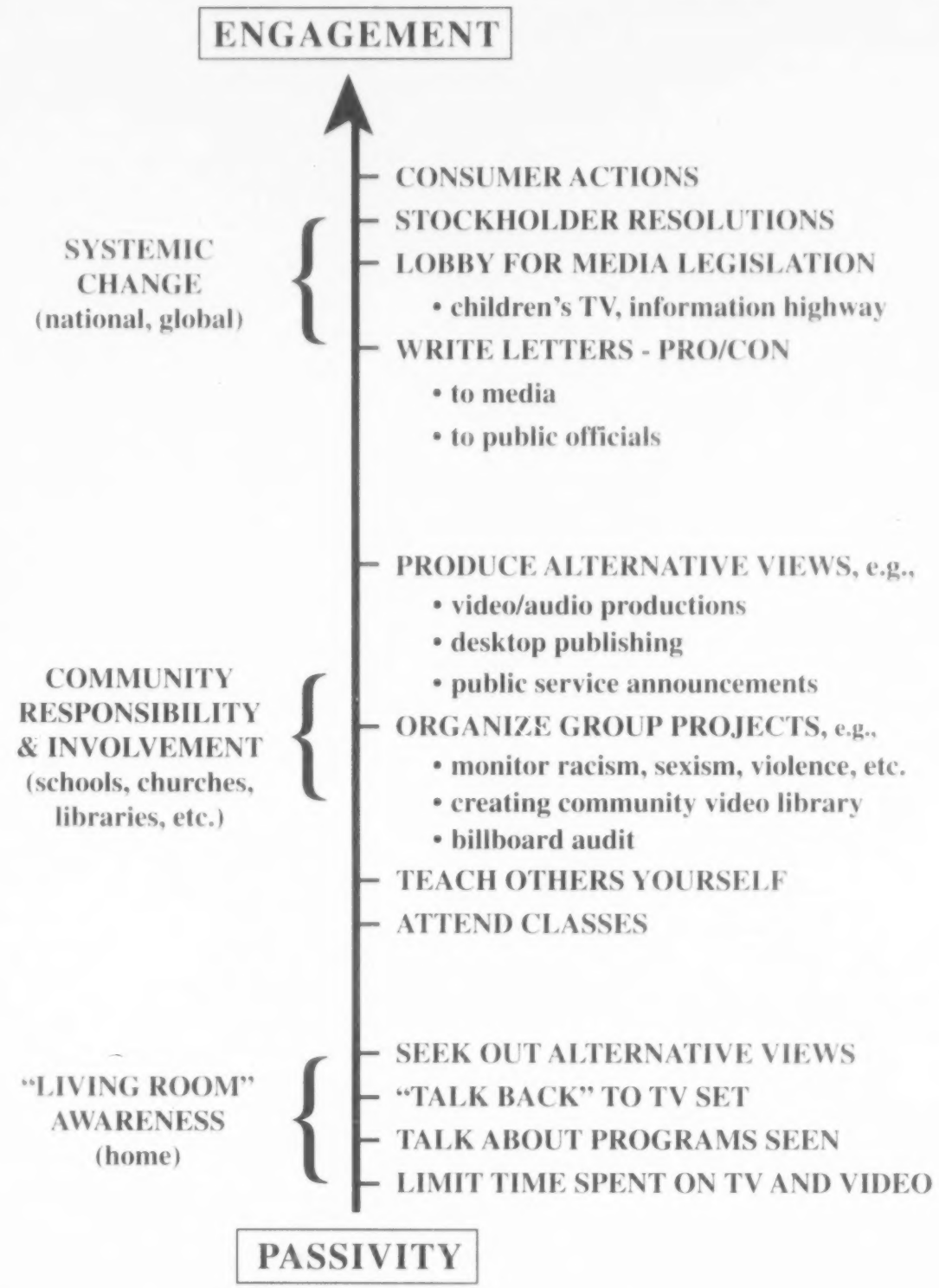
E HANDOUT #22

From Passivity to Engagement



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•

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Beyond Blame

CHALLENGING VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA

A multi-media literacy program in five comprehensive units for community education and empowerment.

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1. INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW
- *How to organize effective programs in your schools and community.*
- *Background articles, bibliography and audiotape, "Issues and Answers."*
- *A 90-minute, video-based "Town Hall" presentation to introduce teachers, parents, religious and community groups to key concepts and strategies for action.*

2. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (*Grades 4-5*)
- *Eight lesson plans, 17 worksheets; eight video segments.*
- *Explores the missing consequences of media violence and challenges Hollywood's heroes and heroines. Kids discover how much violence they regularly see on TV and its impact.*

3. MIDDLE SCHOOL (*Grades 6-8*)
- *Eight lesson plans, 22 worksheets; eight video segments.*
- *Helps older kids create peaceful endings to stories; teaches about violent "jolts per minute" and inspires ways to make a difference.*

4. TEEN/ADULT
- *Seven session outlines, 11 handouts, five video segments.*
- *Explores deeper issues of violence in sports and the news as well as sexual violence in music videos and movies. Includes dozens of action and advocacy activities.*

5. PARENT/CAREGIVER
- *Seven session outlines, 21 handouts, four video segments.*
- *Taking the "Movie Ratings Quiz" is revealing; challenging the "Six Myths of Media Violence" is informative; learning the "Four Effects of Viewing Violence" is enlightening. An ideal curriculum for groups of parents, grandparents and caregivers of young children.*

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